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VARIETY

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A spectacular future for entertainment

Not so long ago, show people were happy to reach an audience of a few thousands at a time.

Now, thanks to Electronics, they play to millions—sometimes more than 50 millions.

When Electronics got into the act—up went the curtain on a new era in showmanship and entertainment. The tiny electron set a global stage for radio broadcasting. Television in black-and-white and then in color was next on the program. And a new "high" was reached in the fidelity of recorded music. The world of show business—drama, vaudeville, motion pictures, opera and music—has felt the tremendous impact of Electronics, and has benefited from it.

And new acts are in rehearsal! Among the many productions under way is Electronic Light, an RCA development that will improve television pictures in homes and theatres, and provide new concepts of theatre and stage lighting.

Yes, with Electronics in the act, there's a spectacular future for show business, and RCA, pioneer in Electronics, intends to narrow that space between future and present as quickly as possible.

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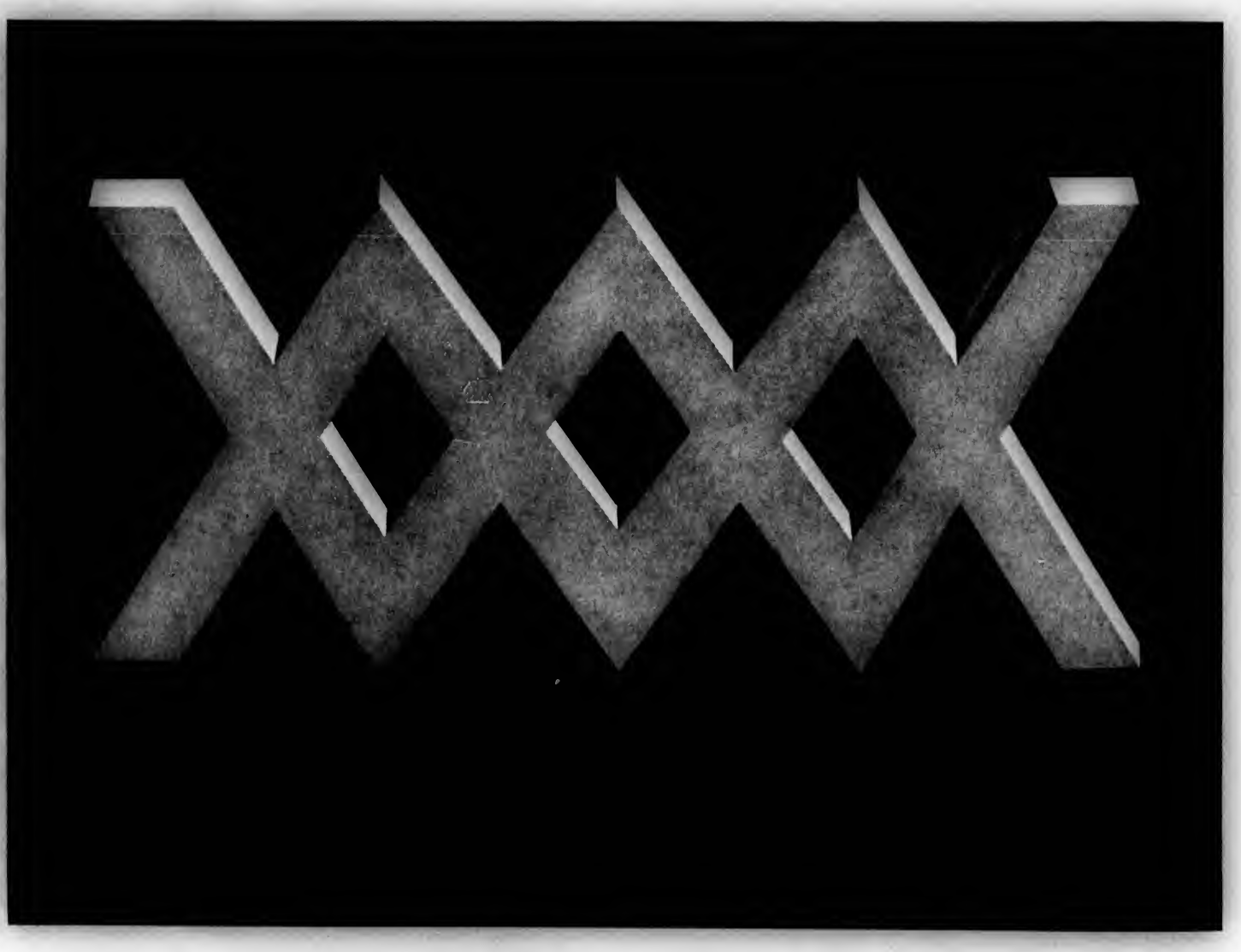

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VARIETY

VOL. 197 No. 5 NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 5, 1955 PRICE 25 CENTS

1954 IN BIZ THERE'S NONE LIKE

Video's Inroads on Legit Works 2 Ways; TV Ballyhoo, in Turn, Aids 'The Road'

By LAWRENCE LANGNER
(Co-Director, Theatre Guild)

Conditions never remain the same for very long in the theatre. Each season presents its own special problems, and the theatre people usually find their methods of overcoming them. This year the theatrical season of 1954-55 was ushered in amidst a bewildering fanfare of "Spectaculars" on the part of its young competitor Television, which largely used theatre folk in programs of so-called "colossal" importance. The "Spectaculars" did not materialize as something which forty or fifty million Americans would listen to with detriment to the legitimate theatre, and although these "Spectaculars" are now improving considerably in their popular appeal, nevertheless the legitimate theatre is managing to survive them with its accustomed tenacity.

Lawrence Langner

But the onslaughts of television have made it increasingly difficult for national companies or touring companies to exist on the road. Here it must be admitted that the ability of a person to stay home and see a considerable number of theatre and television stars in good

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When Ed Murrow Comes For a 'P.-P.' Here's Wha' Hoppens: Carl Sandburg

By CARL SANDBURG

Flat Rock, N. C.

When Ed Murrow and his Liberty Boys, a five-man crew, counting Murrow as one, arrive for a job, it seems to be a pincers movement. Two come by plane, two by motor car, one by railway. Anyhow that is the way they came last August to my home in North Carolina. This was Murrow's invasion of his home state, a flanking movement. There was no cavalry but Fred Friendly always looks as though he had just got off a foam-flecked horse or is ready to get on one.

Having arrived they work day or night with vim and vigor for a victory in sight. After midnight, on two nights as well all talked till three in the morning. They have all been places and you can learn from them. Murrow's mimicry of the speech tones of Winston Churchill or a logging camp Swede boss in Washington are worth hearing. Charlie Mack, a newsreel veteran of 20 years before he went into tv, is quiet and reserved; he wouldn't know where to begin on his memories of fires, riots, gangsters, cadavers, film stars or celeb-

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British Ban Nudes

Oldham, Eng.

Nude revues will in future be banned by managements of the Empire and Royal Theatres here.

Jack Vaughan, Empire manager, said that the new policy was to bring back the family audience. They would not reach this aim via nudity, he said.

Air Travel Taps Aussie Coin For Top Yank Names

By NORM LOUDEN

Sydney.

Outside of the booming film trade, Australian show business was highlighted by an invasion of American talent. A couple of enterprising Americans, Lee Gordon and Benn Reyes, adopted the stadium idea and demonstrated — to the surprise and envy of everyone else in the more conservative reaches of the business—that you can present top-drawing entertainers in vast, draughty, uncomfortable boxing arenas, without benefit of dressing or props, and the public will love it—paying steep admish (by local standards) gladly.

Gordon outfit has paid handsomely to secure its attractions, but they're making money.

Teenagers and middle-aged folks from average neighborhoods, cheerfully forked out over $3 in such numbers that the Gordon organization produced a take of $171,000 for the Louis Armstrong visit,

(Continued on page 46)

Stereophonic Recording Ends 'Live' Vs. 'Canned' Detection, Says Reeves

Stereophonic sound recording is being developed to the point that it will be "virtually impossible" to distinguish an orchestra playing live from canned music, comments Hazard Reeves, president of Cinerama, Inc. This outfit is the equipment branch of the Cinerama setup.

Discussing the past year and future prospects, he stated this week; "New techniques in stereophonic sound recording will lead to a great new industry being developed not only in the theatre but in concert entertainment when the cost of hiring a live orchestra would be prohibitive, at country fairs, for example, or festivals held in large auditoriums. The musical results of multiple sound

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WORLD PANORAMA OF AMUSEMENTS

By ABEL GREEN

The gals stole the 1954 headlines.

What they had, and why they did, and whom they did it with, commanded attention and boxoffice. It was the year of Marilyn and Gina, Judy and Zsa Zsa, of Marian Anderson signing with the Met Opera and Mae West inventing the male striptease. Marlene Dietrich put glamorous grandmas on the roulette tables of Nevada and Lillian Roth became the unofficial exploitation chief of Alcoholics Anonymous. Finally Carol, Edna and Hazel, those three naughty ladies from windy lane, blew up the eastern seaboard.

"It's A Woman's World" made the hit parade in more ways than one.

Some of the publicity was shared by the opposing sex, per Debbie and Eddie, Zsa Zsa and Rubirosa, Pier Angeli and Vic Damone, Rita Hayworth and Dick Haymes, Aly and Gene Tierney, Marilyn and Joe. And then there was Grace Kelly—easily the No. 1 success story of 1954. A nice girl from a nice family who clicked, on account of talent, in a number of strong film opportunities with Gable, Holden, Stewart, Cooper, Granger and Crosby.

The year, of course, was also marked by such salient showmanship highlights as unspectacular

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Good Crop of '54 TV-AM Bloopers

By JO RANSON

The 1954 redolent crop of Spoonerisms and solecisms, ill-graced stances and quadruple-entendre fissures on the chaste and highly moralistic radio-tv lanes is indeed worthy the admiration of connoisseurs.

A new high, or should one say, a new low, was reached in the year's verbal and posterior pratfalls on the audio-video channels when a handpicked Stork Club waiter carrying a tray laden with elegant gastronomic attractions tripped and went sailing across the highly polished floor, much to the low-comedy guffaws and merriment of the moujiks viewing the tv program. This is the type of unintentional custard-pie comedy that successfully flat-tires the pretensions of cafe society.

Nor can the social scientists

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Early Deadline

This edition of VARIETY went to press ahead of the normal Tuesday deadline.

Production detail, binding, etc., and the size of the 49th Anniversary Number, made it necessary to omit certain standard departments.

Even Statesmen Need Ghost Writers, Much As Comics Depend On Gagmen

By HARRY HERSHFIELD

"Polly wants a wisecracker." Those who "parrot" the thoughts and words of gag-writers are indeed the blessed and absolved. Blessed, in that they are highly paid if the material is rendered intelligently and made to sound like their own. Absolved, if it doesn't click, and are always saved by the thought that their gag-writers are slipping.

Harry Hershfield

This is paralleled by the boss who had a letter writer. All the boss had to do with it, was sign it. "Ghost-writer" finally left and another was hired. Shown a sample letter, the boss looked it over and opined: "No, no—this isn't up to my standard!" Some day, some comedian will do his "parroting" honestly. As in the case of the fellow who was always propounding "ideas"—world-shaking thoughts, according to his own thinking. Instead of getting a dictaphone, to immediately record his pedantic propoundings, he was told to get a parrot, who would not only repeat as a dictaphone, but also be a pet. So he got the parrot

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Harry Cohn's Foundation

Hollywood.

Harry Cohn is transferring a block of Columbia stock, number to be later determined, to Harry Cohn Foundation. Trustees include Joan Perry Cohn, Alfred Hart, Mendel Silberberg, Larry Irell, and B. B. Kahane.

Foundation assets will be used for various charitable gifts.

Page Will Rogers For Comeback Of Political Joke

By HARRY RITZ

Hollywood.

Whatever happened to political jokes?

Last year, at a time when the newspapers were filled with reports of President Eisenhower's golfing predilection, Jack Benny went through the Hillcrest Clubrooms with a golf bag. Whereupon George Jessel cracked: "Where're you going, Jack? To Washington for a White House conference?"

The quip broke up the roomful of professional comedians. But the line died there; it probably is still laying there. Ordinarily, any line "thrown away" at Hillcrest is on some television program that very night. To paraphrase George Gobel, You just don't hardly hear no political jokes anymore.

Why? Politics can't be that grim. And if so, why aren't the comedians puncturing the inflated false fronts of some of the more preposterous politicos like they used to? What standup comedian of the old school shied from dust-

(Continued on page 58)

'Tough Critic' McCarten Leaves Self Wide Open By Selling Scenario

John McCarten, the acidulous New Yorker mag film critic, is leaving himself wide open for a taste of his own medicine. McCarten, whose sharp criticisms of Hollywood films have long irritated the film companies, has sold an original to FF Productions, Fred Feldkamp's newly-formed indie company.

The story is "The Silken Affair." McCarten has already completed a film treatment and is currently working on the screenplay. According to Feldkamp, the picture will go into production early in the spring, probably in England. No release deal has been set yet.

Davis, Rank Chief, Voices Confidence in Future; Tele No Great Menace

London.

John Davis, deputy chairman and managing director of the J. Arthur Rank Organization, expressed his confidence in the future when speaking at a Dorchester lunch to present awards to the group's winning showmen. He averred the company was in a better position today to meet the storm that was brewing than ever before.

Admitting the industry faced increased competition from the coming of commercial tele next fall, Davis asserted that the small tv receiver could not displace the picture theatre as a center of mass entertainment.

Commenting on the increased press coverage of tele, Davis said that as the BBC monopoly was being ended by the introduction of the commercial web, the change had had its effect on the quality, ideas and vitality of the state programs. The advent of commercialism had spurred BBC to greater efforts, and would result in increased competition which would have to be met by improved showmanship and high quality pictures.

D. J. Goodman, manager of the Gaumont, Wood Green, London, was named champion showman of the group and W. H. Kipps of the Dominion, Tottenham Court Road, manager of the champ theatre.

Saroyan Seeks Stage Prop, Winds Up Doing a Commercial for 'Variety'

By WILLIAM SAROYAN

Malibu.

William Saroyan

In 1939 an important character in "The Time of Your Life" sends another important character on an errand to buy the latest issues of Time, Life and Liberty.

In bringing the play up-to-date for its revival at the City Center for two weeks beginning Jan. 19, 1955, I was stumped for a moment for an appropriate replacement for Liberty, for the very name of the magazine had to be meaningful in terms of the play, and at the same time reasonably well-known. Thus, the name could not be the Saturday Evening Post, Collier's, Cosmopolitan or Red Book, for instance, for these names would mean only one thing—themselves—and I needed a name that meant both a magazine and a universal value. A magazine named Tomorrow would have been all right, but Tomorrow, like Liberty, is no longer published.

In view of the fact that I have been reading VARIETY for about 30 years, I was a little surprised when VARIETY struck me as being not only an appropriate replacement for Liberty, but the only replacement that could equal Liberty in meaning, and perhaps even surpass it.

I wondered, in fact, why I hadn't selected VARIETY instead of Liberty in the first place, in 1939. I suppose it was an accident pure and simple, although I may have preferred Liberty to VARIETY because, among other things, the play is about liberty and the undesirable probability of its gradual or sudden forfeiture or loss.

Still, variety implies liberty. As one disappears or diminishes, so does the other.

Variety of Liberty

Now, I'm not going to consider *kinds* of liberty, or kinds of variety, because that takes a lot of time and tends to end in oversimplifications. For instance, a Russian statesman recently defined liberty as the freedom not to be burdened with the responsibility of defining or enjoying liberty, or some such thing. Which is good enough for cigar-and-brandy chit-chat among bigshots, but no use at all to the perpetually intimidated, or the people in plays, who are the non-elected representatives of the people at large.

I believe the name VARIETY suits "The Time of Your Life" even more than the name Liberty be-

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ABEL GREEN, Editor

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DAILY VARIETY
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DCA Acquires Danzigers' 'Devil Girl From Mars'

"Devil Girl from Mars," a British-made science fiction thriller, has been acquired by Distributors Corp. of America.

Film, made by the Danziger Bros., is in black-and-white. It was sold to DCA for a reported $35,000.

German Actors' $2,000,000 in '54 Dubbing U.S. Pix

By HAZEL GUILD

Frankfurt.

The dubbing industry, a comparative unknown in the States, is one of the prime money earners for German actors, who picked up close to $2,000,000 in 1954. Some of the best known German stage and screen stars are earning extra coin, but no extra recognition outside the industry, for their synch work.

It's also a dark-of-the-night affair, cloaked in mystery biz, for some of the top names don't want their stage and film coworkers to know they're in the dubbing racket.

Among the best "voices" are actors from two major stages in Germany, the Dusseldorf City Theatre headed by Gustav Grundgens (now a director, but formerly one of the country's top actors), and Bogeslav Barlog's Schiller Thea-

(Continued on page 58)

HORACE HEIDT
For Swift & Co.
Starting Jan. 8th
Offices—J. Walter Thompson, Chicago

Actors, Arise!

Philadelphia.

Editor, VARIETY:

I have felt for some time that the merchandising device I will describe to you would invade our milieu. It is here. A deejay here in filadelfia (sic!) verbalizes re a product namely: Quinlan's Pretzels. He has also been beating a skin for "House of Flowers" at the Erlanger here. He gave away two tix for the play each day to anyone who can add two and two (there are many misses).

His pitch is: think of how much more you will enjoy the play munching on Quinlan's Pretzels. How can a merciful God allow this profanation?

Actors arise!

We will be uttering our jokes soon to the fulminations of pretzels. A new pointkiller is here.

Ruefully,
Russ Brown.

The Feast of Prosperity

This has certainly been the Comeback Year for all of show business; echoing at the boxoffices and in the bull market for amusement stocks.

The personality side of "Comeback" is detailed in the 1954 roundup story herewith. But the real comeback is the motion picture industry itself. Currently it's almost like those Happy Daze of World War II—unhappy for the world but a boxoffice bonanza when all the manager had to do was to open the doors and then get out of the way of the rush.

Meantime show business over-all has grown bigger—as the text of this 49th Anniversary Issue vividly underscores. Nobody can guess the ultimate impact of color television, or home-toll television, or theatre closed-circuit television. Each represents a big omen of things to come.

In a booming market for amusements, with present horizons apparently unlimited, it is astonishing but not unexpected that the roof blows off on "demand" talent. Thus Milton Berle's reign as Mr. Television with $20,000 to $30,000 in weekly wages is topped by Jackie Gleason crashing through with a deal for one vidpic per week for $65,000.

The boom factor shines in current Hollywood economics: pictures costing $3,000,000 to $5,000,000 to make and grossing 10 or 12 millions in contrast to the pace of only a few short semesters back when a total rental of $1,000,000 on a feature loomed as the jackpot at the end of the producer's rainbow. Symptomatic of the new premium on talent were the two Irving Berlin deals of 1954, packages yielding the composer-showman some $1,300,000, as detailed in VARIETY only a couple of weeks ago.

Or consider the phonograph disk industry. It has grown to an immensity previously inconceivable—something like a quarter of a billion dollars in annual volume!

Of course there are feuds and quarrels in the wings. Producers and exhibitors fight over the division of the swag. The public complains, but pays $7.50 per seat for hot legits—and may soon be paying $10. Remember Joe LeBlang?

Finally, following the pattern in American industry generally, show business has gone in for diversification—to the extent of taking over a ladies' girdle business.

Show business is jumping. Right now may be the greatest boom of all time in entertainment. The feast—and the fury—is well exemplified in the current text. Read on, students.

Abel.

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NBC Ties Coast Awards, Including 'Nominations'; Oscar Gets $1,300,000

Hollywood.

NBC has tied up exclusive telecast rights to the annual awards events of both the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

Deal negotiated here by Fred Wile. net's West Coast program veepee ties up Oscar Derby for tv and radio for six years. Television Academy is an exclusive for three years. Contract with Oscar Academy, approved by specially called meeting of Board, initiated with prexy Charles Bracket and involves minimum payment of $1,050.000, which with option renewals could raise total to $1.300,000.

Financial terms on Television Academy deal are withheld by Wile, who indicated immediate interest of advertising sponsors.

Tele Acad pact gives NBC renegotiation rights at conclusion of three years.

On the Oscar contract a tv-radio airing of nominations is included. NBC heretofor has telecast only annual Oscar sweepstakes from Pantages theatre. Academy retains right of refusal of specific sponsorship after next awards event, contracts already having been signed for second year of Oldsmobile sponsorship in March of 1955. This means nominations will be broadcast Feb. 12.

L. A. to N. Y.

Zsa Zsa Gabor
Gloria Grahame
Hedda Hopper
Cy Howard
Jerry Lewis
Vincent Price
Phil Regan
John Wayne

N. Y. to L. A.

Charles Schlaifer

N. Y. to Europe

Maurice Eisenberg
Ida Haendel

Europe to N.Y.

Donald Hayne
Jeanmaire
Garson Kanin
Roland Petit
Liam Redmond

'54 DREAM PIC: 'WHITE XMAS'

Paris Revisited by Former Longtime Expatriate; The Then-And-Now Of It

By WOLFE KAUFMAN

Paris.

A repatriated expatriate, dropping into Paris today after a 25-year hibernate at home, is struck first by the obvious—plus ce change, plus it's the same old Paree. Some of the tags have changed. Most of the faces have changed. A few modernisms have managed to creep in. But, for those of us who are crazy enough to love the town, there will never be any other shrine.

Having said which, let's look at the changes, some of them. For a would-be literat, the first view is a shock. Twenty five years ago, of course, Paris was headquarters for Gertie Stein's "lost generation." If you knew any of them, you keep looking for them in all the Montparnasse bars and cafes. And you find nothing but ghosts. Because "the lost generation" now belongs to Proust's "temps perdus". And if that's too highbrow, this expatrate must point out that he was a member of that "lost generation" acrobatic troupe and a genuine dyed-in-the-inkwell VARIETY mugg at the same time.

So. The Dingo Bar was the hangout of Hemingway when his name was Hem and before they began calling him Pop. Both Hem and the Dingo have disappeared. It's a laundry now. Complete with automatic washing machines a l'Americaine. Across the street is the apartment building where Isadora Duncan spent her last years. I don't know who lives

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Sees No Breach Between 'Sane' Exhibs-Distribs

By JAMES R. GRAINGER
(*President, RKO Radio Pictures*)

To the best of my knowledge exhibitors have been complaining about rental terms, whether percentage or flat terms, ever since theatres were first built. Frankly, I do not think there is any breach, that is, between the sane exhibitors and the distributors. And the majority of theatremen are sane, clear-thinking men. Agitators are the cause of trouble in our industry and many of them have little, if any, interest in theatres.

J. R. Grainger

As for production, statements that producers and distributors are cutting down on product for the purpose of eliminating many neighborhood and small-town theatres are about the silliest statements I have ever heard. Producing companies are in business to try to pay dividends to their stockholders, and I know of no one who would cut off business revenue that would mean a profit.

Smart exhibitors play pictures they think will make profits and, in my opinion, the majority of exhibitors would rather pay up to 60% and make money than pay 35% and break even.

The entry of new companies in production and distribution will have no effect on major companies. The success of any company's staying in business depends entirely on the quality of the pictures they produce, and the same applies to the producers of all commodities. I think there is room for a limited number of modest budget films if they can be made at a reasonable price and the producer can satisfy himself that his policy is sound financially.

I think we are in a great business and am happy to be associated with it. If there is less talk and more work, everyone would be happier. There is entirely too much uncalled-for agitation in the motion picture business now.

India's Pix Biz Seeks Bans on Foreign Films

Bombay.

Strong pressure being applied on the India Government to impose total ban on dubbing foreign pictures for showing in India.

The film industry also is pressing the government to bargain for an equal number of Indian films being imported into Britain and the U.S. in return for permission to import British and Yank films into India.

Antitrust Action Profitable Mostly In Film Industry

The motion picture industry continues to be the most vulnerable target as far as treble-damage suits are concerned. Although similar suits arising out of antitrust cases have been filed in other industries, the payoff has nowhere approached that of the film industry.

The film industry has been waging a campaign to get the Government to amend the antitrust laws so that the treble damage section is eliminated. The Dept. of Justice has been considering the easing of the treble damage action, but there is apparently a cleavage in Government circles on this point. An article in the December Journal of the American Bar Assn. points up this difference.

Chicago attorney Benjamin Wham, author of the article, quotes the testimony of Federal Trade Commission chairman Edward F. Howery against the abolition of treble damages. Wham, who urges that the treble damage provision be retained, says that "we are informed that" the attitude of the Dept. of Justice "foreshadows an early report adverse to mandatory treble damages by the Attorney General's National Committee, to study the antitrust laws."

Wham, in his defense of the present method of collection, says that "it is the additional two-thirds recovered as penalty, free from income tax that makes these suits financially worthwhile to plaintiffs." The Supreme Court, however, is

(Continued on page 59)

McGEE ORDERS LIGHTS TURNED ON NEOPHYTES

A circuit operator this week undertook an active role in trying to build new film star material. Pat McGee, general manager of Cooper Foundation Theatres, Denver, instructed all house managers of the chain to "practice what we preach—we must accord proper publicity for new young people who could become stars."

McGee said the company has booked Metro's "Bad Day at Black Rock" and "Green Fire" and of these he commented, "Metro has done something which I have been advocating. They have laid special emphasis on a new young man who has the potential of becoming a star." He referred to John Ericson.

McGee further instructed the Cooper managers: "I want you to get all the material possible on this young man. I want him displayed prominently in your lobbies, in your newspaper ads and any outside publicity you can arrange."

McGee and other theatremen over a recent period have expressed concern over the declining number of known players available to films.

$12,000,000 IN DOMESTIC B.O.

BY GENE ARNEEL

Many pictures made the boxoffice bigtime in 1954, and emerging as biggest of them all is Paramount's "White Christmas." This Robert Emmett Dolan production, first in Par's VistaVision widescreen process, tops the year's list of wham moneymakers with a gross of $12,000,000 in domestic (U. S. and Canada) rentals.

Columbia's "Caine Mutiny," produced by Stanley Kramer, made place postion with $8,700,000 in distribution revenue, followed by Universal's "Glenn Miller Story," produced by Aaron Rosenberg, $7,000,000; 20th-Fox's "The Egyptian," in CinemaScope, produced by Darryl F. Zanuck, $6,000,000 and Par's "Rear Window," produced by Alfred Hitchcock, $5,300,000. (Full list of big grossers on page 59.)

In large measure, 1954 was particularly notable for its emphasis on the "package." The top studios, attempting to fens only films of stature, played with big budgets. The stress was on multiple star names, important story properties when they could be found, elaborate production appurtenances and new processes. There had to be a package of many elements.

"Christmas" is an example. Par went for participation deals in luring Bing Crosby and Danny Kaye, also gave Irving Berlin a cut for his musical score, added Rosemary Clooney and Vera Ellen to the cast of stars, showed no signs of stinting in mounting the property, and capped all this with color photography in the V'Vision system. At $12,000,000, "Christmas" has come to be the most successful musical on the books, copping the crown held by "This is the Army," Ber-

(Continued on page 59)

Safari With Peck (Greg) of Lie-Ons

By COL. BARNEY OLDFIELD

Gregory Peck would prefer never to have a lion in one of his pictures.

He's even leery of that mewling feline ancient shackled to MGM's trademark.

Every year, about this time, when he gets with the boys and girls in pub and/or bar, his conversation mellows and you get the idea he feels like he is living on velvet . . . and who can say he isn't?

Peck got himself in this position, not because he trusted a lion, but because he placed faith in a man.

Now, anyone knows that faith is to Hollywood as a fish is to the Sahara, especially where men are concerned and there are women to concern themselves with them who are passing fair and pretty fair at making passes, too.

But, Peck at the time of our telling was half the world around in Africa, and he figured, in that land of the primitive, that things were pretty well in focus.

He took a calculated risk, along with another Hollywood habitue named Robert Preston, that the suave Continental who spoke with an Austrian accent was every inch the big game hunter he claimed to be in the hiring hall.

This was important assuming for Peck, because he was the stand-your-ground hero of the epic. Preston was scripted as a coward and was entitled to run from any lion who charged. The scenario, the director, and his natural inclinations were all on his side.

Not so with Peck. He had to plant his feet, fire as long as his ammunition lasted, and if the critter came on—he was given last resort license to reach out and wring the lion's neck, or something.

His guarantee that nothing—but nothing — would happen to him

(Continued on page 63)

'Gone' Continues Its Epic Pace at B.O.; $33,500,000 Take With '54 Reissue

More so than ever at the top of the roster of the film industry's greatest customer lures is David O. Selznick's 1939 production of "Gone With the Wind." This epic of the Civil War, with Clark Gable and Vivian Leigh in the leads, went into reissue (for the fifth time) over the past year and brought Metro a domestic distribution gross of $7,500,000. This would be ultra fancy coin for a new production on the first time around.

Thus, the total gross for "Gone" has soared to $33,500,000. And there's always the prospect of further re-distribution in the years to come.

There may some day be a challenger to "Gone" as King of Fort Knox, but it's not at hand at this time. "The Robe," 20th-Fox's biggest, looks to be settling for close to $19,000,000. "Robe" has $16,000,000 chalked up so far and still has a few thousand theatres in the U.S. and Canada yet to play. The $19,000,000 figure is an estimate of the full playoff score.

Newcomer to the list of alltime bonanza pictures is "This Is Cinerama," which heretofore had been omitted because of its limited circulation. It's figured at $12,500,000 ultimately in domestic rentals, on the basis of an expected theatre gross of $25,000,000 with half of this considered as what the distributor would collect under normal circumstances. ("Cinerama" is not "normal" in that the production, exhibition and distribution are integrated in one setup).

Basis for determining "Cinerama's" distribution gross is a 40% deduction for theatre operation expense. Add to this a 10% cut of the gross as the theatre profit, leaving 50% for the distributor. Film has played only 13 theatres in the U.S. so far and opened in one Canadian situation, in Montreal, Dec. 27.

'Waterfront' Wins German Okay After Nix

Frankfurt.

"On the Waterfront" (Col), which was recently handed a reject by the West German Classification Board, resulting in considerable space in the local press querying the board's inadequacy to judge and often unfair decisions, won an okay on its second showing to the board. Approval means that the film is eligible for 3% reduction of amusement tax in the various German states.

Another Columbia film, which also requested reappraisal, "Double Destiny," was turned down by the Board.

'Participations' Make Profit Guesses Tough

Some major Hollywood studios are going into 1955 with nothing but uncertainty about how much the new year's production budgets will amount to. In many cases, before determining the price of a film, the producer must await not only completion of its lensing but also its complete playoff in theatres. Sounds like haphazard economics, but no. It's simply all due to the growing number of participation deals with players, producer partners and other talent.

There's no telling how much the participants' shares in gross or profit will be until the films involved are completely sold and the auditors are brought in. A top player, for example, receives a 50% profit cut on a pic that earns $1,000,000, rakes in $500,000. This amount could be considered part of the budget.

Carreras Again Heads London Variety Club

London.

James Carreras has been re-elected Chief Barker of the London tent of Variety Clubs for a second term. Nat Cohen was named as first assistant and Ben Henry second assistant barker. Billy Butlin was chosen Doughguy and Norman Harrington, Property Master, with David Jones serving a second year as Press Guy.

At the first session of the new 1955 Crew, a special committee was named to organize film shows for hospital and institution inmates who are unable to visit places of public entertainment.

It was also reported thtat Sir Louis Sterling had donated $5,600 to the club to commemorate his 75th birthday

Granada Theatres Net Up; Divvy Holds at 5%

London.

An upward swing in trading results and net profits is reported by Granada Theatres, the theatre chain controlled by Sidney L. and Cecil G. Bernstein for the year ended last Sept. 30.

Trading profit showed an improvement of $100,000 or $1,066,000, with the net jumping from $203,000 to $237,000. Common stock dividend is again being distributed at the rate of 5%.

Rosen's Paris Trek On Cinerama Biz

Arthur M. Rosen, executive assistant to Nat Lapkin, Stanley Warner's v.p. in charge of Cinerama production, planed out to Paris last week.

Rosen will remain abroad for 10 days on Cinerama business in connection with the Lowell Thomas-Merian C. Cooper production of "Seven Wonders of the World," as well as with the opening of a Cinerama outlet in Paris.

1 5

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Actors' Fund Is In The Best Tradition of Show Biz

By WALTER VINCENT
(President, Actors' Fund of America)

This is the story of The Actors' Fund—a Christmas story—and will you bear with me while I have a little chat with you about the famous men and women, its Founders, and those others of the theatre that I have either known or seen in the days of long ago. Of necessity this requires a more frequent use of the personal pronoun than I usually employ.

Walter Vincent

The Fund came into being June 8, 1882, by an Act of Legislature of the State of New York. At that time there appears to have been no theatres in New York, except those devoted to the drama, along with Tony Pastor's, housing a type of vaudeville of that period, and a sprinkling of burlesque theatres. There was, of course, no radio, no motion picture theatres, no television, no summer stock theatres, no theatres in the round, so that an actor had only the type of theatres that I have named in which to try to earn a living. As there were no airconditioned theatres, but few braved the hot weather and remained open during the summer. However, in June there were some five in N. Y. City housing dramatic and musical productions, and one in Brooklyn, as follows:

Ada Gray in "East Lynne" at the 5th Avenue Theatre
Lillian Russell was at the Bijou in "Patience."
Mascot was at the German Theatre.
Osmonde Tearle had his benefit at Wallach's Theatre—"Standing Room Only."
Frank Mordant was in "Shipmates" at the 14th St. Theatre.
Amy Lee at Tony Pastor's.
"Esmeralda" at the Madison Square Theatre.
At the Novelty Theatre, Brooklyn, Fay Templeton was appearing in "Pettina."

A very good season for an actor consisted of 30 consecutive weeks, some few in New York and the balance on the road. It was unusual for an actor to work 40 consecutive weeks in any year, and all attractions usually laid off the week before Christmas and Holy Week, or the actor received but half salary if playing.

The New York theatres did not have nearby Brooklyn, Jersey City and Newark to draw from to any appreciable extent, for Gotham could be reached only by ferry. There was no bridge spanning the East or North Rivers, and no tunnels. The Brooklyn Bridge was in process of construction. Because of the difficulty of reaching New York there were two theatres devoted to the drama in Brooklyn, also one in Jersey City and one in Newark.

Among the Fund's founders were all the Frohmans—Charles, Daniel and Gustave—Lester Wallack, Albert M. Palmer (its president), Edwin Booth, Edward Harrigan, Henry Abbey, William J. Florence, J. K. Emmet, Bartley Campbell, Adam Forepaugh, F. F. Mackey and many others. Mr. Mackey was a member of the board of trustees for some 25 years.

Back in 1881-82

The theatrical season of 1881-82 was none too good. I am not sure that there were any theatres other than those in N. Y. City that were open that summer of 1882. In consequence, with a more than four-month layoff there was considerable distress among the players and there was a constant call by the less fortunate on the more fortunate for loans, which could not always be repaid. So at the instance, I believe, of Fanny Davenport, who planted the seed in the mind of Louis Aldrich, a meeting was held and there were present not only the founders, but others of the theatre as well to discuss the possibility of forming a charitable corporation for the express purpose of doing away with these constant solicitations for loans and the waiting at the stagedoors to contact the actors who were employed. The purposes were clearly defined, i.e., that any case of need, of illness, or hospitalization could be brought to the attention of The Actors' Fund and the case investigated, and if legitimate and worthy, aid would be given swiftly, secretly and compassionately.

Several benefits were held and moneys were raised in that way, and by contributions, so the Fund was on its way. In its first year there was expended for relief $12,349.07, and the amount has been greater each year, until this past year we have spent $265,813.29. As of today, any play that endures 15 weeks or more in New York City gives, by agreement with Actors' Equity, a benefit for the Fund and often two or three benefits should the play remain a second or a third year on Broadway, or have a successful tour.

Its Operation

I believe it is the most economically administered charity in the world, certainly as economically administered as any charity with which I am at all familiar. But 13% of the Fund's income goes for administration—this year but 10%. No officer or trustee receives a penny for service. There are 187 now receiving aid weekly, and there are 25 in hospitals and other institutions.

The Fund has a beautiful Home for the Aged at Englewood, N. J., and in conjunction with the Percy Williams Home at East Islip, Long Island, we support on its ground floor, an infirmary, complete with doctors, nurses, medical and surgical equipment. Emil Friedlander, President of the Percy Williams Home, who is also a trustee of The Actors' Fund, was instigator of this infirmary, and is directly responsible for its proper functioning. As of the moment, there are 11 patients there. It is a beautiful Home with very spacious grounds, charmingly landscaped, a greenhouse and a swimming pool. Percy Williams had for many years highly profitable theatres in Brooklyn. Upon his death he left his lovely summer home to the actors, together with half his fortune to maintain it.

I came to New York in June 1889 and here I spent my 21st birthday—Aug. 10, of that year, and I have known during all these 65 years many of the great of the theatre, not always intimately, however. Upon my arrival in New York I registered as a student at a school for acting, conducted by Dion Bouciceant at A. M. Palmer's Madison Square Theatre. Mr. Palmer was quite a portly man, wearing sideburns. I got to know him well. William Winter was perhaps the most erudite and certainly the most highly thought of dramatic critic of that period, and Alan Dale the most caustic and I believe the most feared. I knew them both well.

Of all the Fund's Founders, all are gone. Daniel Frohman was the last to go. I was elected a trustee in 1911, and became first vicepresident in 1930, and upon Mr. Frohman's demise in 1940, was elected president. Robert Campbell, our secretary, was the son of Bartley Campbell, who wrote a play called "A Heroine in Rags."

There have been but seven presidents of the fund—Lester Wallack, the first ;the others—H. C. Miner, A. M. Palmer, Louis Aldrich, Al Hayman, Daniel Frohman. Mr. Frohman served longer than any preceding president. I have served for 14 years, next in length of service to Mr. Frohman. I pay that splendid man a tribute of respect, affection and esteem.

Robert Campbell, the Fund's secretary for many years, passed away but recently. No man in the theatre had more friends in all walks of life than had Bob Campbell. We are fortunate that we have been able to induce Warren P. Munsell to accept election to that office, for he too is widely known and equally well liked by all who come in contact with him, in and out of the theatre, and their name is legion.

As I told you in the beginning this is a Christmas Story, for the Fund is ever giving, ever serving the ill, the needy and the aged among us, and long after I am gone the good work will be carried on by devoted men and women who have learned, as I have learned, that to serve our less fortunate fellows is a privilege and not a burden. We want to "See that the players are well bestowed."

Yens For Those Yesteryear Broadway Feuds

By LOUIS SOBOL
(N. Y. Journal-American Columnist)

Only the other week, this reporter sent up a shrill lament because there were so few fancy, and for the most part, obnoxious characters decorating the Broadway scene in contrast with the more reckless days of a decade or so ago. Similarly, he finds his columnar confreres have mellowed something he presumes to be expected in the natural aging process. A most unwholesome condition—and I wish I had never brought it up.

Louis Sobol

But it is a fact—and it means dull and duller days are ahead.

Let me explain. Shortly after I was handed a Broadway column to kick around, Walter Winchell, who claimed a bit of priority in this business, began slapping me around in print when he could find time off from throwing the horn at another priority claimer named O. O. McIntyre. Then I moved over to the Journal and Ed Sullivan assumed my chores on the old Graphic. He took a poke at both Winchell and myself and it became a neat three-cornered affair with nobody speaking to anybody else except O. O., who nodded affably over to my corner.

In the meantime, Dan Parker from his sports desk was throwing bricks around handily. Mark Hellinger came into the picture as a general peacemaker and then Sidney Skolsky, who was sent over by the late Harvey Duell to snare my extremely coveted services for the Daily News. Damon Runyon was around, too, not fighting anyone in particular but occasionally throwing a pitchfork with the the prongs only slightly blunted by his satiric velvet.

It was really tres gay and when one night Dan Parker punched a fellow sportswriter named Marcus Griffin and Al Jolson grabbed Skolsky on another night and shook him, thinking he was Sobol, and the same Jolson punched Winchell, thinking he was Winchell who had done him some imaginary wrong—well, now, I guess you know what I mean when I say there was always some excitement around.

Those were the days when an Earl Carroll would get up in the swank Central Park Casino and deliver some sort of opinion to the effect that the fellow across the way at another table (again, by coincidence, Winchell) was no gentleman and a newspaper fellow named Gene McHugh, who is now a big exec on the Daily News, was taken for a ride by the late and not much lamented Jack "Legs" Diamond—but released when he talked himself out with the same smoothness he displays when he lays down four kings and rakes in the pot.

Conditions have changed, let me repeat. Winchell goes chasing bandits and fire calls at night accompanied by other newspapermen, Ed Sullivan and I exchange Christmas greetings, Hy Gardner tosses a posy in my direction and I return the compliment.

It's not a healthy situation. The old, wholesale kick-him-in-the-slats, shiv-his-ear rivalry seems to be a thing of the past. A lot of new boys have come into the business and instead of tearing them apart, everyone rushes to the bar—or into print—to gush fulsomely about their wonderful, wonderful essays. It's sickening.

I had some hope in recent years when a few folks began taking fist pokes at Lee Mortimer, like the time Pat di Cicco did and then was walloped in turn by someone else who figured this was the only fight in town. But all these Mortimer fracases blew over quickly and dull days came back again. There was a little tingle when someone phoned Nick Kenny had been in a brawl—but later it turned out they meant Commodore Dutch's annual ball where Nick obliged by singing one of his oldies, "Gold Mine in the Sky."

It's all too sweet and nice-nellie now, with everyone bowing and scraping to each other except a few diehards who still come through with the whip—but not often enough. Of course, Lennie Lyons and Winchell (ah, that man again!) may meet any day now in some forsaken lot, at 20 paces, with blunderbuses full of epithetic paragraphs and maybe Dottie Kilgallen as referee. There is little hope to be gathered from Earl Wilson—he's not fighting anyone—except maybe Milton Berle.

We might have resurrected some semblance of the truculent days if Burton Rascoe had stayed on the job because he would call a spade a spade and mean Wolcott Gibbs, but even the critics are playing pretty-pretty with each other, except the estimable G. J. Nathan who will occasionally stand in a doorway right next to a theatre and snub all passersby, including Monty Woolley and Gypsy Rose Lee.

PENS INTO PLOUGHSHARES?

The Case of the 1954 Tax Law Vs. The Author

By HARRIET F. PILPEL
(Of Law Firm, Greenbaum, Wolff & Ernst)

It may be that the pen is mightier than the sword, but tax-wise that's not true, unless the reference is to the inventors of new-type gadget pens. For the wielders of the pen—those who write our books, plays, and songs, and paint our pictures—continue to be, with reference to taxes, the least favored group in our economy.

In 1787, the Constitution specifically gave Congress the power to promote the Progress of Science and Useful Arts by securing for limited time to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective Writings and Discoveries. From this, our patent and copyright laws have stemmed. Starting in 1950, however, Congress decided that authors were getting away with murder in those few instances where they were able to get capital gains treatment for their works—that same capital gains treatment which all the other groups in our society are constantly striving for and often achieving. As has been so aptly stated, our chief industry today is the manufacture of capital gains. Against the background of our tax laws with their steeply rising surtaxes on ordinary income, the capital gains tax of 25% is peculiarly important for authors—they are apt to have long periods of drought and then suddenly to strike it rich on a work which has to pay for their bread and butter for a long time to come.

Nevertheless, in September of 1950, the Congress passed a specific law—unique among our tax laws—which singled out copyrights alone of all types of property as never being entitled to capital gains treatment when disposed of by their creators or by persons who had acquired them for nothing, i.e., by gift from their creators. Even prior to 1950, *professional* authors had not been able to get capital gains treatment—nor could *professional* inventors. Both these groups had been thought disqualified from capital gains treatment because it was considered that they were disposing of their creations in "the regular course of their trade or business." In other words, the theory was that their writings and discoveries were part of their ordinary inventory like shoes are part of a shoe store's stock in trade. Query as to the soundness of this reasoning, but, in any event, new or amateur authors—like Kathleen Winsor when she wrote "Forever Amber" and President Eisenhower when he sold his "Crusade in Europe"—did get the benefit of the lower capital gains rates for their copyrights as did the dependents, friends and relatives of working authors and inventors to whom they decided to give all or part of a particular work.

Then the 1950 law came along and left as the only copyright proprietors who could ever get capital gains treatment dead authors—namely the estates of deceased authors and third-party purchasers of copyright properties on the open market—not much incentive for the working author except, perhaps, in the direction of stopping working—or living—entirely. The inventors were not hit by the 1950 law—they were left in the same class as the rest of the population.

Inventors' Preferential Edge

And now we come to this year 1954. The new Revenue Code has placed inventors, as opposed to authors—patent, as opposed to copyright, property—in a specially favored category. Today, under the new law, even professional inventors are entitled to capital gains taxation if they sell their inventions. Gone is the inventory—the shoe store argument as to them. So broad is the latitude given as to what constitutes a sale, that as things stand, it is very difficult indeed to set up the transfer of a patent interest which doesn't qualify for capital gains treatment while it continues to be next to impossible to set up a transfer of a copyright interest that does. Why?

Moreover, under the 1954 Code inventors do better even with respect to ordinary income taxation. If an inventor wants to spread his regular income from a particular invention that was two years or more in the making over a period of years, and thus reduce his surtax bracket, the new law says—yes—let him spread back over five years. Copyright proprietors in precisely the same situation are limited to a spreadback of three years. Again, why?

The Copyright Clause in the Constitution and the copyright laws which have flowed from it proceed on the assumption that authors should be assured of a fair return on their writings and thus be encouraged to continue to write. But what good does it do an author to be protected in his right to get a big price for his work if most of that price is immediately taxed out of his hands while his more favored colleague, the inventor, may keep all but 25% of his profit? Actually, there are still a number of things an author can do—by contract, spread-forward arrangements, and perhaps by skillful use of the partnership or corporation form of doing business—to reduce his tax burden in the years during which he is successful so that he can carry over some reserve into the year when he makes little or no money. But if the present attitude of Congress persists, even the few approaches that remain will probably be systematically sealed off.

When Congress looks at authors, it sees only tax loopholes that need to be plugged. When Congress looks at inventors, it thinks and acts only in terms of providing them with incentives in the form of specially favorable tax treatment.

Apparently, our Senators and Representatives in their anxiety in this age of the atom have forgotten that much of invention rests back on the knowledge contained in writings which are the subject of copyright rather than patent. Moreover, it may well be that our greatest need today is, in the words of Adlai Stevenson, for "the know-why of ethics to catch up with the know-how of science" and here our help comes from what has been known and thought and is reflected in writings and the arts, not from what has been or is being tangibly produced.

Is it that we really value things more than words; gadgets more than concepts? Or is it that like shoemakers' children, the wielders of words, have not used them to persuade Congress of their importance and of the financial necessities of their creators. Unless authors decide to, and can make Congress respond to their tax problems, at least to the same extent as inventors have, they would be well advised to turn their pens into ploughshares, and to patent the latter at once. Only the rest of us 160,000,000 Americans would be the losers thereby.

EXHIBS, BANKS VS. 'NEW FACES'

Have CinemaScope—Industry Will Travel Ahead Next Year: Skouras

By SPYROS P. SKOURAS

The year 1954 will always be of profound significance to me, and I know, to the whole industry.

In a business way it was the most gratifying year of my career for it brought the realization that through CinemaScope the screen today has emerged triumphant and is again fulfilling its role as the world's most popular and vital form of entertainment.

Spyros Skouras

1954 marked the end of the threat of television to the exhibitors and the motion picture industry and brought an upturn in boxoffice receipts. In place of widespread theatre closings of other years, 1954 has also recorded the reopening of many theatres, thereby giving new heart and inspiration to the exhibitors and to many thousands who depend upon the theatres and the screen for a livelihood.

CinemaScope has proved that even free home entertainment like that of television cannot prevail against the superior screen entertainment afforded through the technical betterments and finer techniques which give audiences greater enjoyment in CinemaScope pictures.

I have just returned from a tour which took me to France, Switzerland, England, Italy, Greece, Spain, Sweden, Denmark, and Germany. In Europe, as in the United States and Canada, the advancement represented by CinemaScope has captured the imagination of both theatre men and audiences, as well as leaders of government.

CinemaScope is no longer a novelty. It is accepted everywhere and demanded everywhere because it provides the theatres with better entertainment than they have ever before enjoyed. Therefore, it is bringing prosperity to theatres, large and small, even in the remotest parts of countries everywhere.

Government leaders, more than ever before, are realizing the po-

(Continued on page 56)

20th in Talks With Rank Org

Talks between 20th-Fox and J. Arthur Rank regarding the proposed change in the Rank Org's articles of incorporation are still going on in London, the matter now being in the hands of the lawyers, Spyros P. Skouras, 20th prexy, said in N. Y. last week.

Issue was to have been submitted to the Rank shareholders at the annual meet earlier this year, but was held out at 20th's request. 20th is a large stockholder in the Rank outfit and has complained that the proposed changes are not in its best interests.

Dales Gets 2 Alter Egos

Hollywood.

Hollywood AFL Film Council foreign production committee chairman John Dales is so busy with his chores as exec secretary of Screen Actors Guild, two co-chairmen have been named to assist him in operating committee when he's unavailable.

Ralph Clare, chairman of the council, has designated as co-chairmen Ralph Peckham of the painter's local and Al Erickson of the laborer's local.

Dales has been in office about a month, succeeding Herb Aller, IATSE cameramen's local 659 business agent, following a policy dispute between Aller and the council.

'Fledermaus' Set For C'Scope Pic in London

London.

A modern version of Johann Strauss' "Die Fledermaus," starring Michael Redgrave in the singing role of Eisenstein, is to be lensed in C'Scope and color by Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger. It goes into production Jan. 3. at the Associated British studios, Elstree.

Set in present-day Vienna and entitled "Oh, Rosalinda!," pic will be distributed in British territories through AB-Pathe. Ludmilla Tcherina has been inked for the title part while Anton Walbrook will play "The Bat."

Code Administrator Reiterates Values Of The 'Breen' Principle

By GEOFFREY M. SHURLOCK
(V. P., Motion Picture Assn. of America)

Hollywood.

The Production Code has been rather importantly in the public eye for the last year and a half. There has been fault-finding and there have been cheers; demands for extensive liberalization, offset by prideful pointing to the present high estate of the Hollywood film under the existing regulations. The document itself has undergone some minor changes, and will soon be reprinted in its amended version. What is its future?

A simple answer is very much the same as its past. It has been enormously helpful in bringing the American picture industry to its present preeminence on the screens of the world. Though there are critics who will deny this claim violently, the plain fact is that the makers of pictures have come out flat-footedly for the continued operation of the Code, because they believe it to be a positive value and not a detriment. They want this operation to continue along the same successful lines.

And the reason for this enthusiasm for the Code is that the Hollywood producer knows (better than the critics ever will) that it is not basically a restrictive document. Its surpassing value is that it is aimed at telling producers *how* they can produce any given stories with sound moral as well as emotional values, rather than *what* material they should or should not choose for their pictures.

In the matter of interpretation, the Code will grow along with the industry. As producers become interested in more stimulating and trail-blazing stories, the Code will help them find more penetrating and solid methods of treating them. One of the major contributions of the Code to story-telling has been its insistence on injecting proper compensative moral values into stories which started out to be merely emotional or psychological conflicts. By pressing for the injection of moral conflict into the basic emotional clash, pictures have achieved an additional dimension and a greater density, which is reflected in the enthusiasm with which audiences are turning back to films as their favorite entertainment.

The Code is a moral document, but it is far from making unnatural moral demands on its fictional movie characters. Its aims are quite reasonable. In the classic phrase of Joseph I. Breen, the man who for 20 years guided the Code, its object is "to make pictures reasonably acceptable, morally, to reasonable people." The fact that Hollywood movies, now more than ever, are the chosen entertainment of the families of the world, is a tribute to the soundness of this objective, and to the consummate skill and intelligence with which Hollywood producers are working toward its achievement.

STILL TOUGH FOR UNTRIED TALENT

By JOE SCHOENFELD

Hollywood.

It's the same old story with Hollywood's New Faces. They're still living in a dream world of unfulfilled promises, growing crow's feet and listening to their arteries harden while they wait for opportunities that rarely happen.

On the other hand, the studio publicity mills continue to grind out reams of copy that, for the most part, is contrary to the facts. While the puff departments attempt to create the illusion that all of the studios are jumping with fresh and shining newcomers getting more roles in pictures than they can handle, the truth is that for a New Face to get a big chance is still very much like catching lightning in a bottle.

Hollywood, in fact, is now a tougher nut for the newcomer to crack than ever before. Pictures are fewer—and bigger. And this means that producers and studios are even less inclined to "gamble" with a new face at the all-important box office.

Double-Talk

The two most important barriers to the development of New Faces in filmland continue to be (1) the exhibitors, who, ironically do the most campaigning for new faces, and (2) the banks. When a company puts a newcomer into an important role, it's the exhibitor who offers strong opposition to important terms for the picture, even when the budget is in the top "A" category. In face of this type of battle, the producers have a "to hell with it" attitude and go for the same old familiar faces. The independent producer usually doesn't even get the opportunity to put up a fight for a new face; he goes to a bank, learns he can't get any financing unless he has established boxoffice stars, and that ends any vestige of pioneering spirit on his part.

Grace Kelly Case

It's therefore not surprising that Hollywood came up with very few important new faces in 1954. However, the past 12 months did gain distinction by being the "Grace Kelly Year," since it was then that she really came into boxoffice prominence, and the development of Rock Hudson ("Magnificent Obsession") into full-fledged stardom at Universal International.

Curiously, Grace Kelly got her biggest buildup away from Metro,

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Noah Webster, Dr. Johnson, Funk, Wagnalls and I

Or, The Meaning Behind The Meaning

By HARRY RUBY

I knew it will come as a big surprise to my readers, who are legion, to read that I, at this advanced stage of my life, have forsaken all other things and entered the field of lexicography. I also know that this announcement will be greeted with sneers, snide remarks, and raised eyebrows, "Who is he," they will ask, "to presume to be able to write a new dictionary?" "How dare he?" others will demand, "attempt to re-define words whose meanings have been accepted for so many years; nay, centuries?"

Harry Ruby

Well, I am as objective about myself as it is possible for a human being to be. When the idea of getting up a new dictionary first occurred to me, I, too, made a few nasty remarks that it would shock me to hear. In fact, I was on the verge of chucking it all and going back to the line of work I know something about—baseball—when I recalled having read that there is more than one precedent for this sort of thing; that not all lexicographers agree on the meaning of words.

The word "patriotism," for instance, has been variously defined as "Devotion to one's country," by Noah Webster, and "The last refuge of a scoundrel," by Dr. Samuel Johnson.

Another word these distinguished scholars didn't see eye to

(Continued on page 61)

Tough Enough to Read A Normal 'Variety': Wilson

By EARL WILSON

New York.

Editor, VARIETY:

You're mixed up. You're finding articles to put into your Anniversary Issue when you should be helping your readers to find time to read what's in the regular issues.

What I mean is that your average issue is so filled with news that . . . well, did you ever read *all* of it yourself? You ought to try doing it sometime.

Then once a year you come along and give us five pounds more to read!

"It's possible," as Herb Shriner says. I found a way to do it . . . read the regular issue, I mean. I want no special credit. It was accidental.

I happened to be going to my dentist. Passing a newsstand, I got a sudden inspiration. I would buy a VARIETY and, in an hour or two in the dentist's chair, I would be able to get pretty well through your paper.

Well, sir! I got so absorbed in the news in VARIETY that I didn't notice the drilling—in fact, my dentist now is thinking of giving patients a VARIETY instead of a local anesthetic!

That takes care of the regular issue of VARIETY—and now we come to the problem of finding time to read the Anniversary Issue.

Obviously a mere bout with a dentist won't be long enough for that.

What that will take would be a hospital sojourn, at least. I am hoarding my Anniversary Issues against that day when I have to go into a hospital . . . and it may be that dying will be fun, after all.

But tempting as it appears to be, I don't want to go into a hospital just yet. And so, if you don't mind, I am going to have a couple of my assistants come in and give me a hand with the lifting when your Anniversary Issue arrives. No sense getting a hernia, I always say.

Yours in literature,
Earl ("Oil") Wilson

Blames Exhibs For Not Encouraging 'New Faces'

By DARRYL F. ZANUCK

Hollywood.

Exhibitor criticism of Hollywood is presumably an Unfinishable Symphony, and one of the most blatant themes, because it is a plaint in which all sections of the exhibitor orchestra can synchronize at will. It's titled: "The Crying Need For New Faces."

Darryl Zanuck

Not only are film producers turning out an insufficiency of product but they are compounding their delinquency by using the same handful of stars over and over again, according to complaint. Sadly enough, there is no little truth to this part of the allegation.

Motion pictures do need an infusion of new talent. The current supply of stars is inadequate. But who, primarily, is to blame for this situation? As a producer who believes in taking a chance and who knows how ready his fellow producers are to assume the risks, I say the exhibitor himself is the culprit.

Exhibitors large and small betray a common allergy whenever a film salesman tries to sell them a picture solely on its merits as entertainment or dramatic virtue. "Who's in it?" is the paramount quesion in clinching a deal. Since the inception of the Star System this has been the determining factor. There appears to be no lessening of exhibitor insistence on this point, now or in the future.

This exhibitor attitude has instilled in producers the fear that they will not get proper bookings on adequate terms unless they base their efforts on casting or star names. As a result the studios must compete with each other for the limited supply of established names, salaries soar as reputable personalities find themselves sitting in the driver's seat—a condition further aggravated by their income tax burden—and the net result is that talented newcomers fail to get the breaks they would otherwise get.

Occasionally a story can provide in one of its lesser roles the opportunity for a young player to catch

(Continued on page 55)

'55 Vintage Year For Pix: COMPO

Hollywood's 1955 product gets a boost in COMPO's most recent release of a series of "friendly talks" to newspaper editors and publishers. Ad, appearing in the Jan. 1 issue of Editor & Publisher, says that "the word from Hollywood is that the new pictures coming up in '55 are even better than the notably fine films that have been entertaining the American people for the last several months."

The advertisement, 34th in the series, states there are several reasons "for this pleasant state of affairs," noting that one is the encouraging support the public has given pix released during the last few months, and another is the lift the industry got when the Federal admission tax was reduced in April.

Another factor in the industry's favor, the ad says, is "nothing less than the well-authenticated fact that the novelty of television has worn off and people are going back to the movie theatres for their entertainment."

From every standpoint, COMPO asserts, "1955 looks like a vintage year for the movies. And that means happiness for everybody. So once more, Happy New Year! This time it's for sure!"

Warners Product Deal Covers New Zealand

Warner Bros. has closed a deal with the Kerridge-Odeon Circuit, operator of theatres throughout New Zealand, for the showing of WB product throughout 1955.

Circuit, which is currently installing CinemaScope equipment in all its houses, will give early playing time to Warner C'Scope productions.

There Are No Straight Men Left!

By JOEY ADAMS

Today everybody makes with the jokes. The busdriver deflates a passenger with a punchline. Senators aim for laughs when the cameras are turned on. Lindy's waiters have always served more yox than lox. Former champs like Maxie Rosenbloom, Tony Canzoneri and Rocky Graziano can flatten an opponent faster with one line than they ever could with their fists. The Lampshade Wearer and The Table Comic are still around making with the wisecracks.

Joey Adams

More than ever, any comic worth his weight in laughs must be prepared for battle. A good comedian has a joke file that he carries with him in the back of his funnybone at all times—ready for an emergency. Like in case he should bump into a bad audience, or a group of hecklers or one solitary pest.

His gags should be categorized to fit any subject. Most emeees have a gag file where their brains should be. As soon as they spy their prey, the files start turning, their heads light up and the jokes pop out. One famed comic consulted an eminent brain surgeon—he wanted to have his bad jokes removed. In this particular case, the comic died but the brain surgeon is a very big hit at parties.

The tongue is mighter than the sword. A properly-placed insult can be deadlier than the Atom Bomb. Masters of Ceremonies from the Borscht Belt to the Palladium have thrown lines that killed more people than the H Bomb. The art of insult has replaced the manly art of self-defense. Jokes have replaced judo. And anyone can be a David if he can sling mud at a Goliath. A sharp insult can cut deeper than a scalpel. Mel Allen said to an annoyer, "In your case, brain surgery would be only a minor operation."

A good comedian has learned that a wisecrack is the sincerest form of flattening. Fat Jack Leonard once ripped a whole audience to shreds because they didn't appreciate his humor: "You've been a grand bunch of seats."

Fred Allen needled a whole city, "I went to Philadelphia," he cracked, "but it was closed."

Georgie Jessel insulted a whole country, "France," he ad-glibbed, "is like a country run by the Marx Bros."

It was an unknown tailor who once rapped the whole world when his customer complained that his pants weren't ready on time. "It only took God six days to make the whole world," the customer complained. "Yeah, but look at the shape the world is in and look at the shape of my pants."

Wits Way: Warfare or Wordfare?

If you want to win in a battle of wits, you must be armed. If the Government would only realize that their chemical warfare is out of date. Show people could win any battle with comical wordfare. Point out the target and we can kill 'em, slay 'em, murder 'em, tear the house down, knock 'em for a loop, fracture 'em, crucify 'em, and sometimes we can even bomb! Show people play their own version of Pin The Tail On The Donkey. Just point out the jackass and we pin the joke on him.

Jack Zero to another comic working in Las Vegas: "You're so unfunny, you couldn't even make the winners laugh."

Morey Amsterdammed a pest, "Why don't you go out and play in the traffic."

Henny Youngman to a bore, "When you were born, something terrible happened. You lived."

Jack Benny about Phil Harris' musicians, "Those guys could play three numbers and still stump the experts on 'What's My Line'?"

Gene Baylos heckled the food at Hanson's drugstore, "I think they're putting makeup on the roastbeef."

A woman phoned the reservation desk at comic Alan Gale's N. Y. nightclub and asked him how much the minimum is for her little child. Alan answered, "Same price for everyone, six bucks. Why?" "Well," she argued, "the airlines charge half-fare for children." "So," said Alan, "put the kid on the plane."

Max Asnas of the Stage Delicatessen was bothered by a woman who complained, "Your food gives me heartburn." "What'd you expect?" answered Max, "sunburn?"

Jane and Betty Kean were bothered by a baldheaded boor, "Why don't you get a toupee with brains in it?" was their flattener.

Jan Murray was irked by a producer, "He takes stars and makes unknowns out of them."

Director Alex Segal who is "king" on the U. S. Steel Hour program to guest artist Tallulah Bankhead, who was showing a little temperament, "Who do you think you are? Me!?"

Archie Robbins bored a bore with, "You're a cross between nothing."

Milton Berle signed the obitchuary of a lush blonde turned blonde lush, "I never forget a face, but in your case I'll make an exception."

Lovable Joe E. Lewis irked by a loudly dressed jerk perked, "You leave a bad taste in my eyes."

Martha Raye-ved to a particularly dull audience one night, "If I'd known you were going to be so quiet, I'd have invited you up to my room."

Cindy Heller to a real pain in the ears, "I'd like to carry you with me wherever I go . . . flat! In a long box!"

Both Sides Armed

Any good comedian can make The Three Musketeers look like amateurs when it comes to cutting up an opponent. But civilians are armed these days, too. They shoot off their gums as soon as their prey is sighted. There are no straight men left.

Like the husband said to his wife after a loud argument, "You have no minor voices."

One customer complained to the waiter that the service was lousy. "What've I gotta do to get some water?" he bellowed. The waiter leaned over and whispered, "Why don't you set fire to yourself?"

Girl about her persistent suitor, "He's like a summer cold. I can't lose him!"

The neighbors have never heard an angry word out of my wife, Cindy, and . We have the apartment soundproofed. One time, after a minor explosion, Cindy heckled me with, "One more word out of you and I'll pay up my AGVA dues." It was the wrong night for Jan Murray to ask Cindy, at Danny's Hideaway how she liked married life. "Married life is fine," said my brashful bride, "It's Joey I can't stand!"

After his vacation, Murray knocked the hotel, "This summer resort is so seedy looking, it doesn't even look good in the advertising folder photos."

The SRO sign was up when the drunk insisted on entering the club. The mc was onstage and heard the commotion. He yelled, "C'mon in. There's always room for one bore."

When Earl Wilson's last book was published, I said, "Earl, if I had my choice, I'd read your books first and mine second." "I would do the same thing," he deflated. Lee Mortimer squelched me with, "I read your last book, I hope."

A good general cautions his men to strike where the opponent is vulnerable. A good manager tells his fighter to hit the opponent where he's weakest. The same goes in our comical wordfare. Sometimes it's necessary to strike where it hurts the most, but all is fair in laffs and war.

The man was so thin that if they send his picture to Europe, they'll send us food.

She had such bony legs that when she sat down, her knees made a fist.

He had such a big mouth that he could eat a banana sideways.

He is so dumb that he thinks a blood vessel is a pirate ship.

He is so square that he thinks a bebopper is one who bops bees.

He had such a big nose that he smoked a cigar under a shower.

He was so lazy that he got in a revolving door and waited.

He was so bald that if you looked at him from afar, it looked like his neck was blowing bubblegum.

He was so bowlegged that his wife hung him over the door for goodluck.

He was so old that he remembers white toothpaste.

'Greater Love Hath No Ham'

When show people gather for their own fun, the axe is just as sharp. Most comedians are as devastating and murderous with their fellow funny men. The Broadway fraternity has its own methods of hazing. These cutups have their own idea of fun; they like to cut up other comics.

Milton Berle looked at the lovable but slightly sloppy Slapsy Maxie Rosenbloom and slapped, "You look like a sinkful of dirty dishes." "Yeah," mumbled Maxie, "But you look like the sink."

"Ya crumbum," said Toots Shor to Jackie Gleason, "I'll put you in my back pocket." "Then," said Gleason, "You'll have more brains in your pocket than you've got in your whole head."

Joe Frisco to a comic who packed them out. "You call this an audience? I left more people in my bed at home."

Al Kelly was giving his famous double to a single on the bill. "Whaddya take me for?" sneered the actor. "A dope, a nincompoop, an imbecile?" "At last," said Al, "I found something we can agree on."

Victor Borge to an audience of non-laughing actors, "Is there any particular time you want to be called in the morning?"

Fred Allen was home ill one night and happened to tune in several tv shows on which I appeared. He wired me, "I just bought a new tv set. For $30 extra, it does not get Joey Adams."

I am very happy to arm my fellow comedians with these word weapons. Greater love hath no ham. My only request is that you don't use these on me.

Like the famous star who sent his girl to his personal dentist for a complete denture. When she was all through, she left him. "I don't mind paying for it," said the star, "But now she's laughing at me with my own teeth."

Actor Critics

By TOM CURTISS

Paris.

There is a theory that critics—as is the case with prominent lawyers, military men and politicos—are would-be actors. That "would-be" destroys the theory. Critics, especially the best of them, are actors as a study of the lifelong performances of Hazlitt, Charles Lamb, George Henry Lewes, Bernard Shaw, Clement Scott, A. B. Walkley, William Winter, Jules Lemaitre, Alfred Kerr, Egon Friedell, Francisque Sarcey, August Wilhelm Schlegel—and to drop to the lower regions, Alan Dale and Acton Davies—quickly reveals. True enough, these gentlemen confined their histrionics to real life, but this is by no means the general rule.

Alexander Woollcott, throwing caution to the winds, took to the boards on many occasions and so did Ward Morehouse. Robert Benchley appeared in "The Music Box Revue" and later in films, and Frank Tuttle, once drama critic for Vanity Fair, and Charles Brackett, the first drama critic of The New Yorker, went even further and became film directors. The two trades—criticizing the drama and acting it—seem almost interchangeable Kenneth Tynan, the white hope of British drama critics today, is an ex-actor, and Raf Vallone, the current Franco-Italian matinee idol, is an ex-critic.

Some years ago when Noel Coward was appearing in a play of his own in London, James Agate, the all-powerful critic of the Sunday Times, went to call on him in his dressingroom after the premiere. "Noel," announced the honest Agate, "you are a better actor than you are a writer." "So are you," replied the angry actor-author.

Producers are always trying to entice critics to act ("just for fun"), hoping to show them up as frauds and fools utterly ignorant of the histrionic art of which they write so much and thus render their future criticisms invalid. This policy rarely works as the critic who does take the boards usually steals the show from the professionals, though the roles offered critics are often traps.

Among the roles I have been offered are Dracula, Death in "Death Takes a Holiday" and Mr. Brink in "On Borrowed Time," and I am certain now that the Evelyn Nesbitt story is soon to be filmed I will be paged to enact Harry K. Thaw. Realizing that there is a surplus of ugly actors who could do any of these parts far better than I possibly could, I have rejected all such requests for my services, holding out for the romantic lead in "Old Heidelberg."

Last summer, however, what seemed a friendly and promising offer was made me by Hamilton Keener, screen writer for the series of Sherlock Holmes tv films that are being made in Paris by Sheldon Reynolds. It was in the nature of a package deal, as it called, not only for my appearance but also that of my old friend and fellow critic, Richard Watts Jr., who happened to be vacationing here.

Watts, probably believing the whole thing was a gag, accepted at once and with great glee, but was somewhat surprised next morning when I showed up next morning to take him to the studio. Driving out, we read the script and discovered that we had been cast as dinner guests at a wedding anniversary and that the film commenced with our making our adieux. We had a few lines and, of course, we might be suspected of the subsequent murder, but it would be difficult to work these bits into anything very memorable.

If there is one thing more boring than seeing most movies it is acting in any of them, and even those $10,000-a-week stars seem to me underpaid. The early calls and long waits have remained part of the profession since the days of "The Great Train Robbery" and the industry still awaits some efficiency mastermind who will reduce the great wastes of time. It took three hours to fit Watts and myself into Victorian evening clothes and paste on our moustaches and side-burns after which it was time for the lunch break and Watts, now looking like Adolphe Menjou, was complaining bitterly.

To cheer him up I read him the Paris-Presse column of Jean-Francois Devey, the Parisian Louella Parsons, who having heard of our plans and obviously green with envy, remarked that American journalists were so badly paid that dramatic critics were now appearing in the movies.

Once before the cameras and under the direction of the able Steve Previn all was well. We recited our dialog in long-shots, medium shots, closeups and pan-takes, never muffing a word. Our acting debut completed we were each presented with 5,000 francs (about $12) which—Devey or no Devey—is pretty low pay for an American journalist's day's work. We comforted ourselves, however, with the thought that it is always more difficult to write about something than to do it.

Our plan to visit the Ritz Bar at the cocktail hour dressed as Victorian swells was thwarted by the wardrobe staff who demanded their dress-suits back at once and the makeup man was equally eager to get back his moustaches and whiskers.

I have since witnessed our film and can report without prejudice that both Watts and myself have nothing to be ashamed of. Indeed, I was so good that I am now wanted to play the governor of the islands in a forthcoming pirate film and George Jean Nathan informs me that Watts is up for the role of a titled Englishman kidnapped by the Arabs in his youth in a big Hollywood epic, "Beneath the Moonlit Sphinx."

The moral to all this is a sound one. There is a broad streak of the ham in every critic worth his salt. If there isn't he soon becomes a professor.

Who's Complaining? Plenty To Laugh At These Days

By BENNETT CERF

The canard that no good humorists have made their appearance on the American scene in recent years has been spread exclusively by sourpusses who haven't bothered to look for them.

Bennett Cerf

In the past two decades such top talents as Cleveland Amory, Max Shulman, George Axelrod, Russell Lynes, H. Allen Smith, John Crosby, Mac Hyman, Harry Kurnitz, Abe Burrows, Shepherd Mead, Al Capp, Arthur Kober, Art Buchwald and the late Tom Heggen made their debuts. Add them to recognized stars like E. B. White, James Thurber, Frank Sullivan, John O'Hara, Sid Perelman, George Kaufman, Moss Hart, Russel Crouse, Dorothy Parker, Damon Runyon, Howard Lindsay, Robert E. Sherwood, Wolcott Gibbs, Milt Gross, Will Rogers, Corey Ford and you've got a powerhouse of laugh provokers that's never been equalled in any country or at any time.

I didn't realize what treasures abounded in the field of comedy until Doubleday tapped me early in 1954 to edit an "Encyclopedia of Modern American Humor." I did know the pickings would be sparse before the turn of the century; that's why I insisted upon inclusion of the word "modern" in the title. For me, there's nothing very funny about bad spelling and faulty grammar, which seemed to be the major devices of now-forgotten 10th century "greats" like Artemus Ward, Bill Nye and Josh Billings.

But my treat began when I settled down to reread the complete short stories of such master craftsmen as Ring Lardner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Clarence Day and Dorothy Parker. From then on the job was a joy ride. There was enough firstrate stuff to fill *four* giant-sized anthologies.

This is a mighty good time to remember how many headliners we still have in America who know how to laugh and make others laugh—intentionally. Our sense of humor remains fundamentally sound, although it's possible we haven't been laughing quite *enough* in recent months—or at just the right things.

People *want* to laugh, all right. Two of the most popular selections of the Book-of-the-Month Club in recent months were designed exclusively for laughs: "The Year the Yankees Lost the Pennant" and "No Time for Sergeants." The two early arrivals on Broadway this fall that scored most heavily were comedies: "Reclining Figure" and "The Tender Trap." In David O. Selznick's extravagantly publicized tv whoop-to-do, despite the presence of a battery of super-stars and every surefire gadget in the catalog, the one thing the whole country was raving about the next day was a deadpan comic named George Gobel.

There's nothing like laughter, too, to puncture the pretensions of humorless, self-seeking phoneys. Had we borne that simple fact in mind, certain characters now hogging Page 1 headlines might never have gotten past Page 42. In my book, it's not too late to laugh them right back there.

NO TROUBLE IN HOLLYWOOD

A Tribute To Maurice 'Splash' Evans And To George 'Brudder' Raft

By ARTHUR KOBER

One of the most challenging statements to make (aside from a statement beginning with "one of the most challenging statements to make") is to say that you have a favorite actor who so enchants you that you would go out of your way to see him perform. There is always one captious lout who will elevate his upper lip in what is calculated to be a sneer, and will be quick to tell you that you don't know what you're talking about. All right, so I don t know what I'm talking about. All right, so I don't know what I'm talking about. The reason I've repeated myself is that I have not one, but two favorite actors.

Arthur Kober

Maurice Evans is a man I'd go out of my way to see, and I have gone out of my way (I'm 'way down East on 86th Street) to see him on the stage. George Raft, unfortunately (a word I'm willing to change) does not appear on the stage, but I do go out of my way (I'm usually lost in "Toast of the Town") to watch him on television, and if you'll bear with me for just a moment instead of elevating your u.l. in what is c. to be a s., I'll tell you why I feel this way.

It isn't just their acting that holds a special appeal for me, although in the case of Maurice Evans I've long been an admirer of his talents. (And I'm indebted to him for having removed the dust from Mr. Shakespeare's plays.) No, what usually fascinates me about these gentlemen is what they both do with the lines they speak.

Plethora of Sibilants

For example, I was beguiled by Mr. Evans' interpretation of "Macbeth" when that play was produced on television a few Sundays ago. The special appeal it had for me, I must quickly admit, was that it was done in a studio and televised, and was not shown on a Broadway stage where I first saw Mr. Evans enact the Scottish general whose ambitions, wife, and sword brought him to the throne.

On video (ugh!) when Mr. Evans declaims his Shakespearean lines he "acquires and begets a temperance" that gives him smoothness. On the stage, however, he has a tendency to speak the speech not only trippingly on the tongue, but drippingly as well. Whenever there is a plethora of sibilants, you can be sure of a spray so geyserlike in its intensity that the actors are literally showered with words; the theatregoers in the front rows are also doused by the luminous liquefaction of the lines, to coin a phrase I'll never use again. The actors, however, employ their full cloaks and heavy beards as a form of macintosh against the star's spiattering speeches, whereas the helpless spectators, less heavily accoutered and, in the main, clean-shaven (especially the ladies) are susceptible to Mr. Evans' vocal irrigations.

All I know is that I left the theatre that wintry night in 1941 heavily drenched, and with the strong winds lashing at me, I fell easy victim to a coid and raging fever which racked me for days. (No hard feelings, Mr. Evans. I just wasn't prepared for your inclement readings!)

Yes, I felt secure and comfortable, seeing Maurice Evans on television in the privacy of my own home where I was protected by a glass screen. I enjoyed every moment of "Macbeth," from the time the three Weird Sisters (Patty, Laverne and Whoosis) hailed him as the thane of Clamis, the thane of Cawdor and (this from Whoosis whose gypsy tea leaves were just as prophetic) as the future King of Scotland, to its tragic and bloody end.

Mr. Raft, on the other hand, is no Shakespearean actor. (Stop the presses!) Whenever he speaks the speech, he does it rippingly on the tongue, "tearing a passion to tatters." For years, as a specialist in gangster roles, he was called upon to beat, siug, whip, punch, gouge, kick, torture and maim everything that crossed his path, and that (his own idea, I'm sure) included the English language.

Recently, however, Mr. Raft has reformed. He no longer is the gun-happy hood who resists the law but, instead, is dedicated to upholding it, and does so each Sunday night on television, in the roie of Lieut. Kirby.

Kirby, for all his devotion to justice and peace, still speaks like the thugs with whom he is in conflict. His hat may be turned down in the prescribed manner of a movie detective, his coat coilar may be turned up according to the conventions observed by Civiiian Mike Barnett, Sergeant Joe Friday, and Inspector Mark Saber, but what is showing, and conspicuously so, are his slips—his siips of speech.

That Sunday evening, after watching Mr. Evans in "Macbeth" I saw George Raft in another one of his Lieut. Kirby stories, and again my mind was diverted from what I was secing. I began to speculate on what Mr. Raft would sound like were he to play the thane of Clamis, and this is what I seemed to hear:

She shoulda died hereavder;
Derr would binna time fa-sucha woid.
Temorrer, and temorrer, and temorrer,
Creeps in dis peddy pace fomm day-da-day,
Tuddah lass syllable a recordid time;
An' all our yesdays have lighted fools
De way tuh dusdy deat', Oud, oud, briefe cannel!
Life's bud a walkin' shadder, a pool player
Dat struds and freds his 'our uponna staitch
An' den is hoid no more; id's a tale
Tole bine iddiyid, fulla soun'n fury,
Signifyin' nuttin'.

My favorite actor, George. Him'n dat Maury.

14 TICKET WORKSHOPS FOR FIRST HALF, '55

Continuing its efforts to live up to its "friendly company" status, Metro has scheduied 14 additional Ticket Selling Workshops for the first six months of 1955. These sessions, designed to acquaint exhibitors with the latest promotional techniques, will be held in key exchange centers throughout the country.

In another effort at wooing the nation's theatres as part of its salute to exhibitors during 1955, M-G is stepping up the staging of premieres, both for large cities and small towns. Company will hold a dual preem in Green Bay, Wisc., on Jan. 21, with the Bay Theatre getting "Bad Day at Black Rock" and the Orpheum Theatre "Green Bay." "Bad Day" will also be unveiled with special hoopla in seven Texas cities. A special celebration is also planned for the reopening of Walter Reade's refurbished theatre in Kingston, N. Y. On Jan. 26, the world preem of "Many Rivers to Cross," starring Robert Taylor, will be held in New Haven, Conn.

At all the kleiglight bows, stars and principal piayers of the pictures will appear in person to lend glamor and extra excitement for the theatres involved and the community as a whole.

NO PARADISE FOR TV ALSO

By HAL WALLIS

Hollywood.

Besides bigger profits and more sleep all around, one of the sweetest blessings from the motion picture business' recent return to prosperity is that one doesn't have to start every day reading or hearing those tiresome stories that began, "The - trouble - with - Hollywood - is ..."

Hal Wallis

For a year now the trouble - with - Hollywood essayists and orators have been conspicuously and comfortingly quiet. Nary a babysitter or parking lot attendant has been blamed for keeping folks away from movies as they were in the dark days when television was doing that very thing. It's a matter of happy record, too, that not a single oracle or pundit has predicted for months that tv is killing pictures.

Sparked by excellent films, business has become so good that one can look television straight into its bright littie eye without fear of being swallowed. Instead of pretending to ignore the monster as previously, one can accept it for what it is and go on living with it.

It has been a refreshing long time since anyone said the-trouble-with-Hollywood-is: (a) it isn't making good pictures, (b) it isn't selling them, (c) it isn't developing new faces, (d) its writers aren't writing, (e) it makes only the trite-and-true formuia films, and so forth. In fact, exhibitors, busy counting a hea thier take, have not even had time to view with serious alarm the perennial evils of double features, bingo and free dishes.

The trouble with the trouble finders seems to be that none acknowledged what the real trouble was. Like the blind man feeling the fabied elephant, each grabbed onto whatever his hand touched and said, *this*, forsooth, is the trouble.

At the same time, each found a particular brand of trouble that was not of his making. The trouble always was in someone else's backyard. Likewise, everyone who read of these shortcomings convlnced himseif in his heart that he was not guiity; the criticism was intended for a couple other people.

Yeh, What Was The Trouble?

Finding the trouble with Holiywood became a game whose first rule was that only wrong answers would be considered. The object was to beat around the bush, being careful not to disturb any foliage lest the reai villain lurking there, tv, be uncovered.

It was a diverting game that no one could lose. Whenever it was charged that Hollywood was failing to discover new taient this easily couid be refuted by everyone. New faces had been introduced at all studios—Marilyn Monroe, Marlon Brando, Debbie Reynolds, Rock Hudson, et al., and I couid claim some too—Shirley Booth, Burt Lancaster, Dean Martin & Jerry Lewis, Lizabeth Scott, Kirk Douglas, Wendell Corey, Corinne Caivet, and Charlton Heston.

When it was alleged that Hollywood dared to make only the simple, surefire, bang-bang pictures, all of us couid, in good conscience, take quick umbrage. If we were interested in making only trite subjects, wouldn't we all make horse operas? Many of us frequently had been accused of sticking our necks out in making a so-called "art" picture or an offbeat thing. One of these was my own "Come Back Little Sheba," which demonstrated that adult themes can be successful at the box office. In a simiiar mold is our current VistaVision filming of "The Rose

(Continued on page 51)

Good Films Best 'Cycle' for H'wood, But It Sure Looks Like the Bible Is Set for a Big Celluloid Revival

By JERRY WALD

(Production V.P., Columbia Pictures)

Hollywood.

Hollywood has rediscovered the Bibie for what it really is—the greatest anthology of stories, fables, true accounts, histories, memorabiiia and expressions of faith ever gathered together under one cover.

Jerry Wald

It certainly is no secret that every studio — major and minor — has its story department staffed with readers and literary experts whose job it is to cover literally everything — and this goes for fiction and non-fiction. Anthologies of short stories, condensed novels, popular plays are as standard in a studio reading department as a dictionary.

Add now to these compendia of stories—the Bible, both Old and New Testament.

It has been said that Holiywood periodically undergoes cycles. Let a successful western, costume drama or musical appear, and the success is usually followed by several pictures of the same type and content. This is one of the great misconceptions of show business, for the only cycle in which Hollywood involves itself is a cycle of good pictures.

The unadorned fact is that producers, writers and story departments are rediscovering the Bible for what, as I stated initially, it really is—an exciting collection of great stories. The Bibie has, as the show business expression goes, "everything." And, indeed it has. At the moment I am concentrating my interest on that greatest of all tales of faith through ordeai, "Joseph and His Brethren," based on a screen play by Noel Langley and John Lee Mahin.

Film History Repeating

Actually, Hollywood is not "rediscovering" the Bibie at all, for motion picture producers have long known of the value of the Holy Book as an inspirational source for story material. Indeed, the first pictures ever made dealt with Biblical themes, for the Bible strikes a responsive chord in every heart and every mind. Despite the crudity of some early versions of Bible stories in terms of technicai handling, their success was tremendous.

It is historically interesting to remember that the motion picture which first touched upon Bibiical themes was for its time the most outstanding undertaking—a film "shot on location" in 1911, when the industry was barely past its peep-show infancy. This was "From the Manger to the Cross," which was to pre-date other spectacles on the same theme—"Ben-Hur," "King of Kings," "The Robe," by many years. With the industry still in an amorphous and formative stage, Kalem Pictures sent director Sidney Olcott to the Holy Land and the city of Bethiehem for on-the-spot authenticity.

Two years later the American film industry was to be inspired technically as well as storywise in an ambitious Italian production, "Quo Vadis," a nine-reel picture which proved to fiimmakers in this country that the hour and a half long feature was entertainment and was commercial. The film version of the Sienckiewicz novel had an Astor Theatre opening on Broadway at the then unheard of price of $1.50. For its day this 1913 version of "Quo Vadis" did indeed have everything—tremendous crowds, huge sets, gladiators, chariots, burning cities, martyrs, the Coliseum of Rome—all the splendor of Antiquity. The Bible was the instrument which made today's feature-length production a certainty. And in the same year that immortal genius of American motion picture making and craftsmanship, D. W. Griffith, began his first important production, "Judith of Bethulia," with Henry B. Walthall and Blanche Sweet. The cinema spectacle, the big budget picture, the roadshow attraction, was here to stay on American screens. Fiimmakers have not forgotten the lesson of those earliest years—the Bibie was and still is the best source for story material.

Chiefly, I believe, it is the universality of the themes. Bible story after story has in it the enduring quality of universality, which only the greatest writers have captured. There are strong emotional conflicts—Cain and Abel, David and Bathsheba, Moses and the Pharoah, Joseph and Potiphar's wife, David and Saul; there are great stories of faith and belief—Moses, Joshua, Jesus and Paul; there are great stories of heroism —Joseph and David, Daniel and Esther. These and other stories are expressive of the six basic emotions and the six basic conflicts—pleasure and pain; fear and hope; love and hatred.

Readymade Situations

It is not enough to show spectacle. If it were we might weil be content with our vista of 10,000 Israelites marching across the desert to the promised iand; or with the thousands of extras who portray the struggie of the Egyptians to sieze the Pharoah's granaries in time of famine. We might settle for the colorful spiendor of Zuleika's desert caravan, its camel corps, its colorful soldiers and shield bearers, its pyramids and temples and city squares. There still has to be story and heart, and I believe that the story of Joseph is one of the best of all Biblical tales.

As I have explained, I am not a proponent of the "cyclic theory of the movies," which dictates that one good success automatically breeds a dozen paler paralleis. I believe in creating only a cycle of good pictures, and from all indications this is the cycle through which we are now going.

If there seems to be a steady stream of pictures with Bibiical background and content, and from all indications there is such a stream, I ascribe that to something else. Universai is preparing "The Gaiileans," DeMille is preparing "10 Commandments," a new version of one of the most majestic of all Biblical stories, and Fox is screenpiaying "The Greatest Story Ever Toid." Other pictures which have not been given any working titles are in treatment or screenpiay form, are on the drawing boards of production designers, and are waiting for a starting signal.

That "something else" may be partly a renascence in reiigious thinking, a revival of interest in matters of the spirit—and the free, western world is undergoing something of a spiritual rebirth and revival. That "something else" is aiso ascribable to the fact that the Bible has truiy been "rediscovered."

I hope that our production of "Joseph and His Brethren" and DeMille's "10 Commandments," and all the other pictures of Biblical content and background may evoke the same "complaint" which that celebrated artist and illustrator, Gustave Dore, famous for his illustrations of Milton, "The Ancient Mariner" and the Bible, among many others, once voiced. He is reported to have said that his pictures got people to reading the Holy Scriptures again, and his art had stimulated the sales of Bibles without his illustrations.

I hope that Hollywood producers can some day utter the same modest "complaint."

Time For Exhibition To Experiment With New Showmanship Ideas

By WALTER READE Jr.

Now that we in exhibition have had a year of experience with a shortage in supply of merchandise, and new filming techniques for the presentation of motion pictures, and several years' experience with changes in runs, the competition of television (with the abatement of television as a competitor in some areas, and an increased competitor in others), with the threat of home and toll tv, and creased competitor in others), with the threat of home and toll tv, and many other problems of high admission prices and increasing operating costs, it is time to reappraise our position within the industry as showmen.

It seems to me that in addition to the many contributions we have made in the past, there are many more contributions that we can and should make in the future. First of all, one of our main responsibilities is to explore ways of building our audiences. Yes, it is true, that in the main, the national gross in 1954 increased over 1953. But statistics show the number of persons who have come to our theatres is decreasing. This condition must be arrested. We must find ways to keep pace with our growing population and potentially tremendous market.

We must exploit the possibility of appealing to different groups. We must find new and different ways of advertising and selling our wares. Merely because a campaign is designed by a major distributor for overall national use does not necessarily make that campaign good in Texas, and in Massachusetts, and in Washington, and in North Carolina. Perhaps there should be two, three or four campaigns. It is up to the exhibitor to find and lead the way to develop new and better selling methods. Perhaps television can be used and exploited well in large urban areas, but it may not reach or pay off in the rural areas. However, perhaps, radio can. Maybe we are spending too much money in the newspapers, maybe not enough.

Certainly, we have a responsibility of encouraging the youth and the children of our nation to come to the theatre. Are we spending as much time and effort on finding a way to make our attractions worthwhile to them? Are we displaying intelligence in our bookings for the holidays and for the weekends? Or is the quick buck, perhaps, unfortunately too often the motivating thought in our bookings? Why, in some situations, wouldn't it be just as easy to play one film at the matinees and another film in the evenings?

Unfortunately, the problems of installing new technical equipment during the past years and a tremendously high rate of film rental have made it difficult and in some cases impossible, to maintain the theatres of America. But somehow, someway, we must beg or borrow to maintain our premises and make them even more attractive than ever before; to find new and better ways of airconditioning, getting manufacturers to make better and more comfortable seats.

Keep Trying New Ideas

More efficiency in our way of operation, better heating, better decorations, new gimmicks, opening and closing of the theatre hours might be reappraised. Maybe we have been creatures of habit and the people in our area have broken with the habit and we don't realize it. Certainly there are many, many methods and ways that we can and should explore and appraise our contribution as showmen within the industry and within our communities.

In many parts of the United States, because of our shortage of merchandise or inventory, it is important that we try to develop new audiences that will like foreign films, unusual films, offbeat films. This requires time, patience, imagination and above all, tenacity. If the first film that's tried is unsuccessful, and the second one is unsuccessful, perhaps it hasn't been sold properly, or it isn't the right type of film to use. It is important to try, try again. The midweek playing time in most of the theatres in America allows for considerable experimentation and development along the offbeat line, which in many cases might develop a completely new audience.

Two, we can use stage attractions. Thought must be given to bringing even a small live attraction into theatres and into towns where there hasn't been any live entertainment in many many months. Why not at least try it?

I believe it will be difficult, perhaps, nearly impossible for even the largest circuit to make a tremendous dent on the overall national situation on some of the provocative thoughts that face us as showmen. Certainly, through our fine trade associations, we can gather together the necessary experiences and run a cross-section opinion in order to pass along to the exhibitors of America the findings and developments that are so urgently needed to maintain our positions as leaders and showmen.

We, as showmen, must meet today's challenge. We cannot stand still.

Spec Fever

To help the cast "maintain realism" NBC is spotting 50 honest-to-goodness mosquitoes on "Yellow Jack," the web's Jan. 10 television spectacular on the "Producers' Showcase" series. In charge of the yellow fever stingers are two Columbia U. authorities, Dr. Howard B. Shookhoff, associate prof of tropical studies (he's also chief of N.Y. City health department's tropical disease division), and Dr. Rogers Williams, associate prof of medical entomology.

The profs are currently breeding the skeeters and presumably fattening them up to give them dimension for the 90-minute colorcast.

'Space Medicine' Script Dramatizes Jet Flight

Hollywood.

Twentieth Century-Fox will produce "Space Medicine," dealing with medical specialists efforts to meet jet age demands. Rolis in April. William Bloom is producing.

Lt. Col. John P. Stapp, U.S. Air Force, feat of riding a rocket sled at 632 miles per hour this week will be incorporated. Talks already have been held with Stapp earlier at government request.

Air Force and Defense Dept. will cooperate in production.

HOLLYWOOD ETIQUETTE

(REAL ESTATE DIVISION)

By MAC BENOFF

Hollywood.

Some years ago I originated the basis for etiquette among the Hollywood denizens apropos traffic. The results are most gratifying, not because traffic accidents were reduced, but because accidents between makes were markedly affected. Since the code was adopted, it is interesting to note, in Beverly Hills alone, there has been a 50% drop in accidents where Cadillacs hit Cadiliacs. This has been enough encouragement for me to formuiate a new set of rules of etiquette affecting real estate.

It is not my desire to tangle with the Supreme Court on the matter of segregation. Hollywood, however, does have its own specific problems. Writers, producers, set designers, unit managers, actors, and tv directors cannot populate given areas willy-nilly. Upon this we all agree, I am sure. But the basic philosophy in purchasing a house still maintains: any person earning $2,000 a week, who *can* afford to pay for it, may buy a house as large as a person making $4,000 a week who *can't* afford to pay for it.

For the purpose of simplicity every occupation has been categorized by a rating, similar to a Dun & Bradstreet rating. Studio heads are AA, dropping to D-minus for washroom attendants and retired studio heads. However, those working in the wide-dimensional media, or color tv are automatically moved up half a rating. And, moreover, anyone working in wide-screen media where subject is biblical, or historical, rating is advanced an additional half category.

This does not apply if the biblical subject is a sequel, or remake (not of the Bible, but of some previous picture; "Demetrius and Gladiators" classified as sequel to "The Robe"; case of Mosk Realty Co. versus Fox). The rule works in reverse for anyone working in westerns in wide-screen.

With this in mind let us take an actual example. Writer, B Classification, may live anywhere within the environs of other B's, but must seek permission of other B-plusses, directors, producers' assistants, aides, ("stooges" not classified as such, unless specifically requested). But he may not live within 500 yards of a producer, nor within two miles of the producer of his own picture or show. If writer owns the package, or is participating in the picture, he may obtain a reversal of procedure by applying to the Academy, where ruling is subject to a unanimous vote.

B-plus and above rating may live in or build English, Regency, Modern (accredited architects only). Lower ratings are confined to Colonial, New Orleans Colonial, Cape Cod, Mediterranean, Morroccan, or any other classification of Spanish. These rules are quite ironclad and building designs or photos must be deposited with the Building Committee for approval. The only changes allowed in the house result from changes in status. E.G., director, becoming independent producer, i.e., rating moves up to A, may add a brick exterior to a Spanish house. Should the individual's status be lowered, the committee acts promptly. Modern houses are finished with tile roofs, English arches are rounded, etc. The committee at all times tries to be lenient. An unfortunate member's English House was given a New Orleans balcony. The result was not bad—the owner was permitted to call the house Louisiana Square.

Conversation Pieces

Most important in our code are opening remarks during visiting hours. If anyone less than AA visits home of AA rating, opening remark must be, "This is the biggest home in town." A-plus must be initiated with, "This must be the most expensive home in town." As the rating diminishes, the Extended Rating Guide will enumerate where it is preferable to use: "Good taste." "Well furnished." "Cosy," "Comfy," "Livable," "Not Bad," etc. The silent investigatory shrug may be used when visiting home of anyone below writer rating. However, any studio head is allowed a question for his opening remark. "Does this house have a swimming pool?" is considered most proper, non-offensive and in good taste. As for the usual question (if asked) one merely points out directions. When the guest rejoins, he is then allowed a first opening remark or, more usually, question. This is called a "stimpf," and a well said "Cute towels," or "Nice" before the opening gambit satisfies the rule book.

Barking dogs are allowed in homes above set designer and story head category (C-). Below that only non-barking dogs. Barking dogs kept outside during the day allowed in A category and above. Only stars in Top Ten and studio heads (AA) allowed barking dogs kept outside during night. Even then propriety rules. Resident must determine which side houses lowest rating and dogs must bark on that side at night. Dogs may not mingle. Robbery of 14-carat gold leashes is punishable by expulsion to Palmdale.

The above applies to the areas of Los Angeles known as Brentwood, Bel-Air and Beverly Hills. Westwood and Pacific Palisades are rather lax in maintaining strict standards. Holmby Hills is taking it to the Supreme Court.

Today's Vogue of the Indie Producer A Natural Economic Development

By WILLIAM GOETZ

Hollywood.

According to the prognosticators who predict the fate and future of the motion picture industry, independent production in the past year has stepped from a fad into a tremendous phase of the business.

Bill Goetz

As a matter of fact, today's independent is tomorrow's major.

Dore Schary, the able head of Metro, came from the ranks of the independent. Jerry Wald, who had a whirl in the field before moving over to his present position at Columbia, is another example. Howard Hughes, who now is the boss, lock stock and barrel, at RKO, for many years was identified with the independent ranks.

No one questions the strength and stability of the major studios. The product and the men behind them attest to this fact.

Nevertheless, the majors today are quite willing, and wisely so, to make deals with independent producers. This situation does not exist because of a product shortage. There are many factors responsible for this move.

The producer who devotes his energy and efforts to a single picture at a time can afford to wait until the right story comes along. He shops around, sees the literary agents, reads until his eyes are bleary, scans manuscripts, looks for the new plays, watching for the property he feels is the one he wants to make.

Then, he seeks the writer of his choice. When the script or the treatment finally emerges, he directs his attention to the director and the stars. It is quite possible the man or woman he is after is not available, and won't be for a few months. Instead of taking the second choice, he is in the dreamy position of being able to await the availability of that performer, or director.

Under ordinary circumstances the major studios make other arrangements and go ahead with the picture. But today, the independent who is associated with a studio won't rush into the project until he is ready. Because of his independence, he vamps until he's ready, and the studio is satisfied to wait, since it doesn't interfere with his program.

It so happens I am going to make a picture with Clark Gable, on my new independent production deal with Columbia. We have the story, "Captain Calico." Gable has a commitment which he is fulfilling at this time, and we do not know when he will be ready to make this film.

He may want a long period between these pictures, or he may decide to undertake another assignment for 20th Century-Fox, where he is under non-exclusive contract, before reporting for our film. That's all right, too, because when he is ready we will be ready, and we can afford to wait.

Recently, I completed a picture with Jimmy Stewart—"The Man From Laramie"—my first under the Columbia pact. It developed that he was ready to go when we had our plans in shooting shape. Well, we knew exactly when we could go, and we did.

Majors' Trend to Indies

Look at the production program of the majority of major studios and you will discover that their releasing schedules embody more and more independent product. This is as it should be, since the majors, with their tremendous costs and overhead, in some measure can keep these expenditures down through such deals for outside films.

In a day when every studio is trimming personnel in every field, including stars, directors, producers and writers—those whose salaries reach fantastic weekly proportions—studios may still enjoy the services of these top people by making deals with ranking independents. These producers provide such talent as a matter of course, to enhance the quality of their product.

Very often, major studios are saddled with a big and expensive literary property which they bought in the first flush of enthusiasm but which they later regret. There may be nothing wrong with this property, and it might be developed into an important picture. Because of various elements involved, however, none of which appeared at the time of purchase, it may not now be feasible to progress with plans for its production, and they're stuck with it.

In the case of the independent, he, too, may have a big and important story, but it's a thousand-to-one chance that he won't go ahead with it because he considered every possible angle before putting out such money. He can't afford to take a chance without knowing exactly where he's going.

Every studio has a fortune in unproduced stories on its shelves, and the odds are they'll remain there, with small possibility of recouping the huge monetary outlay. That's where the independent can come in—he's there to take up the slack with a suitable story he's had the opportunity to develop.

In certain cases, too, an independent tying in with a major can go over the stories on the shelf, and because very often he's a "bright young man," can come up with an idea to lick whatever problem may have made that property excess baggage.

Just Doesn't Cost As Much

In any event, it doesn't cost the independent what it does the major company to develop a story because of his lack of overhead, and he can generally afford to spend more time on it.

The independent is especially valuable to the major in the matter of costs because of this very lack of overhead. That's what frightens every major—the tremendous overhead. By keeping his employment and overhead at low level through operation on only one picture at a time, the independent is able to come up with a quality feature at comparatively low cost, which the major then may grab for his program without having had to bear the tremendous brunt of its production.

In the case of the majors, very often they miss on quality, due to this overhead—they can't afford to take the time to develop each story property separately and the way it should be developed. Studios operate on mass production lines; they have a certain number of pictures on their programs and they must turn out this number, or near it, to meet exhibitor demands.

If a story isn't ready to go, it frequently is put into production simply because they have a star or director commitment to keep. I mentioned above the subject of "second choice" in casting a star for a picture. Because a certain big picture is already scheduled for starting, majors on many occasions, if the star of their choice cannot be obtained, will substitute another with less drawing power. This is done because the delay involved in waiting for the star or the first choice would involve too great an expenditure. Here is where the independent has it all over the major, and the major knows it.

That's why independent production has entered the present-day motion picture scene in such bold overtones; why it is an accepted facet of major studio procedure and planning. The major recognizes the value of the independent in keeping its casts down and its quality up. The future, I predict, will see an even closer alliance between the majors and the independents than ever before, both striving for better motion pictures.

25th Anni of Film Code—Problem Now Is Not Of Maturity But Avoiding Old Age

Cohan & Collier

My favorite theatre story concerns those two great favorites of the past, William Collier and George M. Cohan. I was fortunate enough to be in the revue, "Hello, Broadway," which Cohan wrote for them to star in. Collier, although well trained as a song and dance man, had become our greatest farceur, and his quiet methods of underplaying were classic. Cohan, on the other hand, had not yet branched into dramatic work and still used his brash, swift style of delivery. He couldn't get used to Collier's quiet ways, and on the opening night kept up a running fire of comment under his breath. "Come on, Willie," he'd say, "speak up, they can't hear you. Louder—and funnier." Collier gave him a sidelong glance as they were in the midst of a scene. "What do you think they're laughing at?" he said. "The way you look?"

Peggy Wood.

A Handy Guide To Insincere Compliments

By JEROME LAWRENCE and ROBERT LEE

You may think the critics have a rough time, rushing from the theatre to a cold office to sing a sad or sweet typewriter-song. But it's ordinary citizens, you and I, who really have it tough. What do you say when you don't like a play or a performance and yet you are obligated to go backstage and beard an actor in his bearding room?

As our current contribution to suffering humanity, we offer this compilation, this handy guide. Perhaps one day copies of it will be sold in every theatre foyer, along with the orange squash and the stale chocolate peppermints.

Jane Cowl had a beauty. She would go backstage, take a performer's hands, look squarely between the eyes and say: "Darling, aren't you glad you're you!"

You want to maintain your integrity as an honest workman in the theatre and still not lose an old friend? Max Liebman has an ideal non-complimentary compliment, which fits just about any situation: "I've never seen anything like it!"

Van Johnson uses a catch-all which is guaranteed to save your face, both of them to be exact. It needs a firm handshake, a cluck of the tongue, and a singing heartiness as you say: "How about that!" Van reports that it never fails.

Wordless pantomime is always effective, if you can carry it off. This must be accompanied with sighs, eyes rolling toward heaven, perhaps a hearty hug along with breathlessness which implies that you are frankly too carried away to use mere words. This always gets them. If the dressing room mirror lets you know that you're not quite pulling it off and a few words are necessary, you might mutter adoringly: "Darling, *your* performance!"

A slightly franker approach must be used only on special occasions. This one is reported to have started a feud of a decade's duration, but maybe you can swing it. The occasion: a good play, but a bad performance. Warm it up with a rolling laugh, showing that you had the time of your life, then let them have it squarely in the teeth. "We had such fun sitting there in the audience. You should have been with us."

One of the best examples of "reverse English" was spoken by an Englishman, Sir Arthur Sullivan. He detested an actor's interpretation, but was called upon to deliver a left-handed compliment with perfumed tongue. "Now about your performance," Sir Arthur said. "My dear fellow, *good* is not the word for it."

Sometimes actors help you out. The late Ivor Novello used to jump the gun on dressing-room visitors with "Splendid, wasn't it?" In such an event, all you can do is radiate good-will, and let your carefully-planned double-entendres go down the dressingroom sink.

And When It's a Bomb . . .

Then, of course, there is the outright disaster. Even the most assured performer is likely to feel his aplomb dangling when three-quarters of the audience has been unable to find its way back into the theatre for the third act. Comments such as "Well, you can't always have a winner!" or "Better luck next time!" are a trifle gauche, even when accompanied by a friendly clap on the shoulder. A better tack is an emphatic, "Hang the critics—*I* loved it!"

The technique of quoting the unfavorable reviews of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address has a certain undeniable neatness about it, though it tends to lack spontaneity.

If you happen to have an old stethoscope in your pocket (and who among us hasn't, at one time or another?), you may hang it around your neck as you come into the dressing room, declaring loudly, "I don't know why they sent for me; everybody looks healthy in here!" (This is recommended only for theatregoers who are in good physical condition and have had some training in bare-knuckle self-defense.)

And the suffering playwright—what do we say to him? Perhaps it is best not to recognize him at all. (Usually this is not difficult.) If a greeting cannot be avoided, lean into his ear and whisper, "Had casting trouble, didn't you?" Or, if you are the raconteur type, you can remark: "That first act of yours made me think of a summer house we used to have on Fire Island . . ." which leads into a long and preferably dull narrative of how the termites in the timbers were eventually starved to death by dry-rot.

But perhaps George Jessel's aside to Sid Perelman during the Boston tryout of "Sweet Bye-and-Bye" will live as the classic backstage bon mot: "Do the words 'Mene Mene Tekel Upharsin' have any meaning to you?" You might try this on for size some disenchanted evening when you, too, spot the writing on the wall.

* * * *

Here are a few handy phrases to carry in your wallet, which can be whipped out at a moment's note.

"It's not to be believed!"

"My dear . . .!"

"*That* was a performance!"

"I can't tell you what happened to me when you walked on stage!"

"There's absolutely nothing else like this on Broadway."

"I've seen a lot of plays in my time. But *this* . . .!"

"Words can't tell you what I think."

"Ill tell you this, dear: you *looked* wonderful."

"You don't know what you've done to me!"

"What can I say?"

"I couldn't wait for the play to finish—so I could tell you what I thought!"

* * * *

Perhaps some bright day a guy with built-in honesty will go backstage and speak his mind. In no uncertain terms he will say frankly: "Listen, Buster. The play stunk. You stunk."

This chap will win a special combination Academy-Critics-Perry-Pulitzer Award. We've already designed the medallion: dripping red-blood background with turkey rampant.

By ERIC JOHNSTON

(President, Motion Picture Assn. of America)

Eric Johnston

Notable events deserve annual observance. They call to mind sacrifices of our early patriots and of our later heroes. They revive memories of historic moments in the nation's history, and often they inspire individuals to undertake worthwhile projects and thereby are constructive.

In this Anniversary Number of VARIETY, I want to speak about an event that is notable and worthy of honoring by all of us. It is the 25th anniversary of the Motion Picture Production Code.

A quarter of a century ago, in 1930, our industry adopted a code of good moral standards—a code to be enforced by self-regulation.

As a comparatively new member of the family of communication, the motion picture industry demonstrated that is was growing up and was accepting its responsibilities as a vital factor in the nation's life.

The leaders in the industry showed that they wanted to make the motion picture a constructive and inspiring force as well as a means of recreation and entertainment.

The leaders of this industry recognized even then that decent entertainment was good business.

If those who adopted the code had sought merely to meet the complaints of some groups—and some complaints were justified—the code would not have withstood the test of time.

Now I am not so naive as to contend that every motion picture produced under the code attains the supreme in artistry, the highest in moral doctrine, but any critic must concede that the products of Hollywood do not deviate far from the acceptable moral standards of our society.

A question often asked me is whether the code has tended to make the American motion picture devoid of intellectual content. I think that is an inane question, but one that can successfully be answered simply by saying that the basic plots of comedy, romance, drama and tragedy have not changed in eons.

What our people in Hollywood do is to give these basic plots new, intelligent and informative treatments—treatments that have made the American motion picture desired by peoples in every land and of every nationality.

The American motion picture has brought the colorful events of the world's history to the far corners of the earth; it has portrayed great episodes revealed in the sacred writings of the Bible; it has shown life in ancient, medieval, Victorian and modern times, on land, on the sea, under the sea, and in the air, and it has woven the skein of all human emotions through them.

Under the code, the American motion picture industry has sought and sought generally successfully to improve its product. Great strides have been made in the past 25 years to develop its full potential.

The industry has proved that it can abide by the code and avoid standardization. It knows that standardization in some industries is necessary to achieve success. But the motion picture industry also knows that while standardization may be fine in a can of peas, it is poison in a can of films.

Higher quality films are being produced in Hollywood because the producers are custom-making their pictures.

The industry itself recognizes the improvement in the intellect and understnding of the film-going public. It appreciates the constant demand for better films.

That old bugaboo about the average American having the average intelligence of a 12-year-old child, has gone by the board long since. That fallacy grew out of a study by some people who looked into the records of our doughboys in World War I.

If anyone wants to make a test of whether the average individual American has the average intelligence of a 12-year-old, he had better avoid testing an embryo teenager as of now. They know what some of us in the older brackets don't know they know.

The motion picture industry long since moved out of the juvenile development stage. It has accepted the responsibilities of maturity.

Now, the problem is not in attaining maturity, but in avoiding old age.

With the great resources and resilience at hand in the industry, I am convinced that it will continue to improve its product and will continue to grow in importance as we enter what I consider to be the most enlightened era in the screen's history.

1954—MORE OR LESS

By CLAUDE BINYON

Claude Binyon

I must preface this review of the year just past with the admission that perhaps my keen eye for news has dulled somewhat. When one absorbs reports of events of the day while jiggling a loose tooth, or while half-wondering what can be done about hair thinning at the temples, or while waiting for the morning cup of coffee to accelerate one's functions, one just ain't paying attention like one should. These recollections of people and events, however, have managed to make their impressions on me:

Marilyn Monroe—This girl developed from a body beautiful into a great actress, thereby losing her husband through minor surgery.

President Eisenhower—This man is paying too much attention to golf and not enough attention to people who hate golf, consequently improving his health.

Debbie Reynolds—A fine young girl who is going to marry a young singer named Vic Damone or Vaughn Monroe in a big church wedding at either Las Vegas or Eddie Cantor's house.

Porfirio Rubirosa—Sometimes known as Aly Khan or King Farouk, and often confused with Greg Bautzer. He married someone in 1954, or should have, the cad.

CinemaScope—A great invention for actors who talk with their arms. Up to now only the surface of its potential has been scratched in the scenes showing stars greeting great assemblages.

Jose Ferrer—The thought persists that this man has been announced as being pregnant, but that just can't be.

Cannes Film Festival—A competition among all the great motion picture producers of the world, won this year by a Venetian buggy whip maker with a 16m short titled "The Hummingbird Fouled Her Nest."

Popcorn—Sold during the past year under such various trade names as "A Star Is Born," "Sitting Bull" and "The High and the Mighty," it now costs 10c extra with real butter.

Television—Great forward strides have been made in this art during 1954, including color programs for people with black and white sets, and Red Buttons changing channels.

Grace Kelly—Startled Hollywood by demanding a contract which permits her to collect unemployment checks six months each year. A smart girl, she figures in this manner she remains eligible for something.

Zsa Zsa Gabor—Became George Sanders' ex-wife and someone else's future wife, thereby maintaining her place in line.

"Fanny"—After all these years, became a respectable word again.

Sidney Skolsky—The only man who knew how Marilyn Monroe felt. Could that have been what bothered DiMaggio?

Motion Pictures—After a period of deep despair grosses began soaring, and soon everyone was employed in television.

Terry Moore—Became a successful health club in Beverly Hills.

Mogen David Wine—Thanks to advertising, it was discovered by the hatless squares.

Independent Theatre Owners—Solved their film shortage by announcing they would produce pictures to fill their own needs. Now looking for a fellow with a story to tell.

Jackie Gleason—Something about a hospital room.

Milton Berle—Something about an act of God.

Errol Flynn—Nothing.

Max Liebman—Man of the year. Not only the foremost producer of spectaculars, but president of a brewery and husband of Linda Darnell, with whom he went on a separate honeymoon.

Greta Garbo—Reported ready to come out of retirement if she can find what she went into it with.

Betty Hutton—Reported ready to go into retirement if she can take what she had out of it into.

John Huston—Went to Ireland and the Canary Islands to make a picture about Worcester, Mass. Allergic to New England boiled dinners.

VistaVision—A widescreen process in which the camera lies on its side while the film jumps through two frames at a time. This could have been invented when it first happened in 1934, but unfortunately the man sent the camera to be fixed.

Jimmy Durante—Very busy all year setting himself in solid for when the Democrats take over again.

Cinerama—A charming film process making you part of a new world in which many of your new-found friends have two heads.

Medic—A new television program which arrived in the nick of time for gag writers, who were beginning to show the ravages of Liberace's teeth.

Liberace—A happy pianist who is reported stimulating to women's motherly instincts, previously known as ants.

Tubeless Tires—Revolutionary automotive development copied from a 1910 bicycle.

A House Is Not a Home—Heartbreaking story about wicked people who interfere with the decent functionings of a brothel.

Marlon Brando—Ran away from Hollywood to lie down, then woke up in a French village with his ears full of bouillabaisse.

Howard Hughes—Reported throughout the year as selling practically everything, when actually his only known transaction was the purchase of a new pair of tennis shoes.

Marlene Dietrich—Went to Las Vegas to prove that every man at heart is a Peeping Tom.

Senator McCarthy—And so ends this year.

UA Prez Sees Pix Biz As A 2-Way Street

Impressed By Yank Films' Global Impact, He Would Like To See Wider U. S. Acceptance of Pictures From Overseas

By ARTHUR B. KRIM

To me, Hiroshima is the other end of the world.

Recently, it became for me a sharp reminder of the extent of the penetration of the American motion picture throughout the free world.

Arthur B. Krim

I had gone there entirely as a tourist to try to learn at first hand something of the events of 1945 and to see at close range as much as could be seen in a day, the workings of a Japanese middle-sized city of some 350,000 inhabitants, 800 or so miles from Tokyo, thoroughly Japanese, with an insignificant European colony.

As with the proverbial sailor, tourist or not, I immediately noticed the marquees.

The feeling came back, as so often throughout the world, of being on the main street of one of our own cities, with the same American pictures showing as would be the case in Oklahoma City or Akron. And on the streets, the girls after girls with the Audrey Hepburn haircuts, fresh from the influences of "Roman Holiday." And in the space of less than an hour, after I had visited with some of the local theatre men and the half dozen or more reporters, full of knowledge of our pictures and of our business, down to the fine point of knowing that United Artists had recently rejoined the MPAA after the difficulties over "The Moon Is Blue"—which they had loved in Hiroshima. And what did that mean?—avid for details of plans and coming pictures and processes and trends and asking exactly the same questions as would be asked in Chicago or Boston.

Unfortunately, this is not enough of a two-way street.

Although we in the U. S. keep our market completely free, little or no progress has been made by the motion picture industries of other countries in penetrating this market, or, for that matter, the bulk of the other markets of the world, with the exception to a most limited extent of the British and the Italians. This means that, except for those instances where we make an American picture in Tokyo or Berlin or Paris, and except for the area penetration—as in Indonesia and Thailand by pictures made in Malaya or in Burma and East Africa of pictures made in India, etc.—the customs of the countries of the free world other than our own do not receive, even remotely, any comparable measure of dissemination and the economic strength which we derive from our export is completely lacking to the producers abroad.

Mustn't Be Complacent

Complacency might dictate that we leave matters as they stand—that we have won our way fairly to this unique international position, that this one way dominance of our pictures is the ideal state of affairs—today, particularly, when our export strength is at its postwar peak; and that it is shortsighted and suicidal to lift a finger to aid our competitors to establish export footholds which they have thus far been unable to establish for themselves.

Certainly, there is reason and logic in this position. But, as has been the case with many of our great industries on the international scene today, the preservation of international markets has not proven to be that simple a matter in this intricate, dynamic, economic world of today. It has become abundantly clear to every U.S. picture executive who has travelled extensively around the world, and to the hard working efficient MPEA representatives who are the ambassadors for our industry abroad, that we cannot merely rest on our laurels and let the natural laws of competition, which govern us domestically, work their own results in the export field. Wholly apart from retaliatory barriers which may be created out of the sheer frustrations of being unable to penetrate our markets with their talents and customs and cultures, while our own are flourishing in theirs, there are basic economic pressures which, if left unwatched and unchecked, must inevitably cause the powers that be abroad to cut down our access to many of the screens of the world.

What, if anything, can or should be done to prevent any erosion of this great source of our strength, our export market?

In most countries, where danger exists, our opposition comes from the local producers who are losing heavily or relying on government subsidies because they have no export market of their own, and from government authorities who find it difficult to countenance dollar debts when the same industry is creating no dollar credits. Our strength on the other hand comes from the public and from the local exhibitors whose houses do best with our pictures and might not survive without them.

Slow as the process may be, our job, paradoxically enough, is to strive to make this export market and the flow of picture currency a two-way street. As an industry, we must recognize quasi-citizen responsibilities in the countries in which we do business—just as we expect this of non-citizens in our midst—to establish to the satisfaction of these countries that we are at least trying to create this two-way street, no matter how small the returns to them may be.

We must press our point of view with those amongst us who attack every expenditure abroad, without weighing the extent to which this may contribute to our life blood for more expenditures in the U.S. We must encourage a certain amount of American production abroad, with, wherever feasible, native financial as well as talent participation, so that not only the native customs and culture will be projected to other peoples of the free world, but also to make possible the repatriation to that country of part of the currencies of all the countries of the world in which that picture will be shown, in return in part for the currencies we take out.

We—the U.S. distributors by distributing more foreign films and the U.S. exhibitors by playing them—must try, despite past failures, to obtain more public acceptance for them—and to the extent to which the great American distributing companies, with their vast international organizations, can do so, we must try to do this for them outside the United States as well.

I feel there is fundamental unanimity amongst us on the desirability of the end to be achieved. Despite sporadic criticisms, nothing is farther from the truth than any accusation that it is the producers or the distributors or the exhibitors of America—and not the ticket-buying public—who have kept foreign films from full development in this or any other market.

Progress, if any, will be slowly made. Public picture tastes are slow to change, even under mass onslaught. But the demonstration of the understanding and the will to try, will by themselves accomplish much to foster good will with the producers and government officials of the overseas picture world, and, in the doing, what on the surface might appear to be fostering our own competition will in the end help keep our export market and thereby our industry strong.

When Arnold Picker and I returned from a recent trip around the world, VARIETY headed some remarks at a press conference with the imposing, albeit somewhat tongue-in-cheek caption: "U.A.'s Point IV Program." The picture industry, these past nine postwar years, has in its own way had to navigate many of the basic political and economic problems of the world today; and, as in the relatively few other truly international industries and in government itself, it has had to adjust constantly to new concepts. Applied to the industry as a whole, and not to one company, that caption is not presumptuous, but could reflect the significant part that we as an industry can play on the contemporary international scene.

We are in a great business.

Above and Behind The Call of Duty

By ALAN LIPSCOTT

Hollywood.

A few years ago, our butcher, Mr. Clyde, lifted four gags from a butcher shop routine, I once wrote for Jimmy Durante, blew them up and pasted them in his shop window to amuse his customers. When I saw my jokes stooging for a stack of ham hocks, I blew my top. "He won't get away with this! I'll sue!" I exploded, as I started for the door. "Easy," cautioned Bernadine, my wife, "or never again will he trim the fat off my brisket."

Alan Lipscott

So I counted 10 before we entered the shop. However, I was determined to drive my point home. Before leaving, I picked up a container of sweetbreads, thrust them at Mr. Clyde and said, "If I were to walk out with these without paying, what would you do to me?" Mr. Clyde took the sweetbreads out of my hand and returned them to the counter. "I would do to you, what I would do to any other thief. I'd throw you in jail."

To Mr. Clyde and most business men, a joke is a comical arrangement of words, that becomes public domain the moment they are typed by some frustrated shnook, who can't sleep at night and who is always complaining about pains in his stomach. And should this shnook be driving a Cadillac, then he must be doing something crooked on the side. To them jokes are intangibles. They can't wear them, eat them, feel them, weigh them or use them for collateral. So, they can be plucked like daisies in a swamp.

In the years following the Depression, the hockshops of New York were filled with typewriters of comedy writers. To hold on to mine, I had to double as a designer of bicycle seats, my old trade. So one night when Mr. Katcher, a very rich and penurious relative, invited me to Lindy's for dinner, I was curiously surprised. The old gent operated a chain of clothing stores throughout Pennsylvania. Forty years ago in Poland, he treated my father to a truss and to this day he has never let me forget it. It was nice to dine in Lindy's, a restaurant I could hardly afford at the time.

Over boiled beef in the pot, I found Mr. Katcher a rather friendly conversationalist. But over tea and lemon, he nonchalantly segued his non sequitur chitchat into a plan he had for advertising his clothing empire. The plan required 10 four-line jingles to the tune of "Little Brown Jug." These jingles would be recorded by a vocalist for radio broadcasting. "For a genius like you, 10 jingles should be like rolling off a log," he purred, as he fingered the dinner tab. As a dipped my beef into the horseradish, I thought cagey. I would quote him a top figure with plenty of leeway for dickering. I started fencing. "Mr. Katcher, I can deliver 10 very catchy jingles by the end of the week." Splendid!" beamed Mr. Katcher, "then it's settled." He took out a roll of bills and beckoned to the waiter. "For $15," I added quickly. Mr. Katcher stood up, slapped his share of the check on the table, gave me the look that Caesar gave Brutus, and left.

More Ad Libs Sur-le-Cuff

Here are a few of the many other cuffo requests I received during the years I've been struggling to meet deadlines:

Dr. Kleeber, a Park Avenue surgeon, who once charged me $60 for removing a malignant hangnail, asked me to write a bar mitzva speech for his son. Being a hypochrondriac, I was too beholden to him to turn him down. But while prodding George Kaufman's infected galibladder, the doctor persuaded him to write it. As he aptly phrased it in the rejection slip he sent me, "Your credits stink compared to his!"

Mr. Huckaby, my old handball partner in the Camden YMCA, was elected National President of the Benevolent & Protective Order of Chickenhawks. So I received a rush telegram for 20 "end men" jokes, two parodies and a closing finale for its annual Minstrel Show.

Mr. Turdledov, the man who installed our sprinkler system, asked me if I would write a funny letter to his wife who was a paranoic in Camarillo.

Mr. Kleinschmidt, our browbeaten neighbor, "past" me to the back fence and whispered, "Today's my mother-in-law's birthday. How's about a real insulting telegram?"

Daniel, the man who sells us fish, was losing customers, because, as he put it, "The biddies (but that's not how he really put it) think I'm a sourpuss." So, to dispel these rumors, I wrote him four salmon filet adlibs, three black bass nifties and a short routine on boneless shad.

On one assignment I did get a payoff, which unfortunately didn't turn out too well. It involved a Mr. Gruber, who owns the delicatessen store in Beverly Hills; where I usually buy my heartburn. He was overboard on smoked salmon and asked me for a catchy slogan that might help push it. I was hot that day and came up with "Time to re-lox." In three days he sold out completely, tails, fins and all. To show his appreciation he gifted me with 10 yards of blood sausage. Now blood sausage is one item of food, Bernadine and I can do without. So we invited the blood sausage addicts from among our friends to come over and help themselves. And it took a lot of friends to get rid of 10 yards. Bernadine, the perfect hostess, would always make an appearance with the bourbon and scotch and a tray of hors d'ouevres. And when a few gutty ones dropped in at dinner time, an extra board was added to the table. When the 10 yards were disposed of, I had to buy five extra yards for the comelatelies. After the smoke cleared away, the gift of blood sausage cost me 60 dollars for a case of liquor, two-fifty for the soda and ginger ale, six-thirty for the extra five yards and a temperamental maid who couldn't take the extra work. To top that, I'm being sued by Fred Allen. "Time to re-lox" is his gag.

GEORGE SIDNEY

One of Hollywood's outstanding directors recently completed "JUPITER'S DARLING" for M.G.M. where he is under contract. He is currently preparing "THE EDDY DUCHIN STORY" for Columbia.

Don't Mention It

By ALLEN BORETZ

I must warn you. If you are in what is euphemistically called "show business"—don't mention it.

Recently a miracle occurred. My landlord agreed to paint my apartment. In such circumstances I usually depart for places unknown, but I was in the midst of an important piece of work and my landlord would not agree to any other time. So I had to stay around.

Monday morning arrived and the painter appeared. For a painter he seemed to be quite normal. I talked to him briefly and asked him to do the work as quietly and expeditiously as he could. He seemed to want a reason for this unusual request, plus the fact that I wasn't going downtown to an office. I told him I was writing a play. His eyebrows elevated.

"You write plays?"

"Yes," I said uneasily.

"For Broadway," he asked.

"I hope so," I answered trying to play down any importance.

"My son is a fine singer," he said somewhat tangentially.

"Well, that's good," said I, pedaling backwards.

"Only he can't get a job," he continued, following me.

"That's too bad," I said, pedaling faster.

"You always walk backwards," said he.

"Oh," said I. "I didn't realize——"

"Maybe you know somebody," he suggested. By this time I had lost the thread.

"Well," I answered. "Yes, I know a few people."

"I mean somebody who'll give him a job," he said.

"Well," I said feebly. "Everybody gets a break if they really try hard enough and long enough."

The painter thought this over for a moment, gave me a quizzical look and departed for the bedroom where I soon heard him sloshing around.

The next morning he arrived, but not alone. He had an assistant. One look and I knew. He had brought his son. I dashed into the bathroom avoiding the introduction and stayed there until my wife brought me the news that they were at work. I sneaked down to my desk and concentrated on a stubborn scene.

The painter made a reconnaissance and seeing me at my desk departed. Suddenly a tenor voice broke into song and I was being given an audition. I won't say the voice was bad. It was just atrocious. The singing went on and on. Every once in a while the son (known as Morry, and hailed so carefully and loudly by his father so that I should become well acquainted with it) passed along the balcony under one pretext or another. At these intervals he really let go, holding a high note precariously hoping I would give some sign of recognition. I knew if I quivered even one eyelid I would be lost, so I pretended to be so deeply concentrated that I didn't hear. Finally he appeared carrying two empty buckets which he used as conga drums and broke into a tap dance. On this I gave up, grabbed my hat and dashed out of the apartment and into the street.

Sanctuary

I had nowhere to go. Not one of my friends ever rose at such an early hour, so I went to my barber, a man known to me only as Mike, although he has been cutting what is left of my hair for over seven years. He is a dignified man, well read, versed in music and the horses, and we have had some amusing conversations. Naturally he got to know what I did "for a living" and occasionally I would get him a free seat for a fading show because he liked the theatre but couldn't afford that and the horses.

He was surprised to see me. It was not my usual day to appear but I was lucky. He was in between appointments and I was soon in his chair. I explained the reason for my unannounced arrival, deploring the fact that I was at a very difficult section of the play and most anxious to lick it.

"You write plays?"

For a moment I thought I was dreaming. Was I back with the painter on Monday? No, I was in the barbershop and it was Tuesday, and the barber with the chair next to mine was standing beside me with a gleam of anticipation in his eyes.

"No," I lied. Funny, I had never noticed that barber before.

"He's a new man here," said Mike.

"I just heard you telling him you were writing a play," insisted the new man.

"Well," I said, blushing, "if you call it writing."

"Ever have anything I ever heard of produced?"

I modestly mentioned a play that had run only 10 days in the hope of discouraging him. Unfortunately he had happened to see it.

Just Enthusiastic

"Say," he said. "That was a damn fine play. Damn fine. Those damn critics they don't know a damn thing. I thought it was damn good. Boy, I laughed my damn head off."

"I'll have a shave," I said to Mike.

"I gotta finish the head first," said Mike, cutting off any escape.

"I'm writing a novel," said the new man.

"Well, that's fine," I said.

"Damn good, too," said the man.

I grunted.

"Maybe when I get it finished you and me can turn the damn thing into a play," he suggested.

I murmured something about being very busy, with projects planned for a good many years ahead. I told him I was probably passing up a damned good thing but what could I do?

He was unhappy about it.

"I'm no novice," he said. "I been close to show business all my life."

I assured him I meant nothing derogatory in my attitude.

"Ever hear of Hubert Emerson?" he asked. I couldn't say that I had.

"He was a writer," said the new man. "He wrote plays. Damn good too. Too damned good for these damn Broadway producers to produce."

"Happens all the time," I said.

"I once shaved Noel Coward," he threw in.

"Well, that's fine," I said, looking pleadingly at Mike, hoping he would stop dreaming of a five horse parlay, tilt the chair and hide me under a towel.

"I got the book right here," said the new man. "I work on it during lunch and when it's a little slow. Here, read it. Your sitting on the damn chair with nothing to do. Give the damn thing the once over." He threw a fat manuscript in my lap.

"Excuse me, Mike," I said. "I just remembered something. Got to go." I flung the protecting sheet off, pressed a bill into Mike's hand, handed the manuscript back to the new man, grabbed my hat and hurried out, leaving a row of popping eyes and wrinkled foreheads.

I stopped at a stationery store, picked up a few pencils and a pad and headed for the library. I picked a deserted place and tried to reconstruct the scene I had been working on when I was driven out of my apartment. I worked hard for what seemed to me a short time, when suddenly I began to feel the pressure of concentrated eyes on me. I tried not to look, but I was drawn as if my some strange power. I looked.

A fierce looking woman with the construction of a dockworker was gazing at me with death rays. As she opened her mouth to say the fatal words, I went berserk.

"No," I shouted. "I am not interested. I can't get you a job. I don't want to collaborate. I want to be left alone."

Attendants hurried over as consternation spread through a room that had not heard a raised voice since time began. I was hurried out and booted into Fifth Avenue where a policeman sideled up to me and gave me a suspicious look, I slunk away and lost myself in the crowd a broken man.

I thought of an idea. I would have cards printed. Any time I saw one of these eager beavers descending upon me I would hand one out saying: "I am totally deaf, dumb and untalented. Please place contributions in my wallet."

I stopped by a printer's and explained the whole thing to him. We had a good laugh over it and he promised to have the cards ready in 10 days. As I was going out the door he called me back.

"By the way," he said, "I have a nephew——"

There was no use ducking it. I was bound to get it everywhere I went. I agreed to meet his nephew and read everything he had written. I found it prolix, overwritten and lifeless. I spent an hour going over the pieces with him stressing the importance of sparse writing—punctuating my remarks every so often with, "Remember. Try not to overwrite. Underwrite."

The boy took my admonition to heart. Today he is one of the leading underwriters in the country. He probably has sold a policy to you.

Quality Product Cashing In On TV's Quantity Hucksterism

Producer Compares Film Fans' Entertainment Identification With Sponsor Pitch to Capture TV Audiences

By SAMUEL GOLDWYN

Hollywood.

Only six years ago there were only 3% of the number of installed tv sets we have today—and only about 10% of today's tv stations. By comparison with what it is today, tv was like the motion picture industry in the Keystone Kops era.

Samuel Goldwyn

Nevertheless, I then said in an article in the N. Y. Times Magazine Section that we faced "a titantic struggle to retain audiences." I pointed out that "the competition we feared in the past . . . will fade into insignificance by comparison with the fight we are going to have to keep people patronizing our theatres."

The experience of one of the roughest eras in motion picture history is too recent and the memories too painful for me to revive them by setting them out in detail here.

But the motion picture industry did survive this period and emerged from it healthier and sounder than before. There was just one way to meet this challenge successfully and I find that I said six years ago: "If the motion picture industry is to remain a going concern—instead of turning into one that is gone—it will have to turn out pictures several times as good as pictures are. on the average, today." That time has borne his out is evidenced by the fact that DAILY VARIETY led off its Annual Issue with the headline, "Best, Not Biggest, in Pix H'wood's B. O. Convincer."

So once more the motion picture industry is feeling its oats as the champion who has taken on a contender and emerged with his crown intact. But the contender, television, has many more potent competitive elements than any other challenger ever had and we still must ask, "Where do we go from here?"

First, let us take a look at television itself today. The statistics about this Paul Bunyan of the airwaves are startling. Less than 10 years ago, commercial tv existed as a reality only in the fertile minds and far-reaching vision of men like David Sarnoff, Billy Paley and others like them who could see beyond the horizon. Today there are 415 stations on the air with 197 additional stations already authorized by the Federal Communications Commission. The total investment in these stations is estimated at approximately $350,000,000, and latest reports indicate that their revenues for 1954 will run better than $600,000,000. As of Oct. 1, 1954, there were 31,640,000 installed tv sets in the U. S. with an investment by the public in those sets of approximately 7½ billion dollars. This investment by the public is several times more than the 2¾ to 3 billion dollars invested by the motion picture industry in all its branches.

But I have never feared the competition of television. On the contrary, I said a half-dozen years ago, "The stimulus of this kind of competition should have nothing but good results," and what has happened since has borne that out completely with the public, as usual, the chief gainer.

Television has provided the public with some great entertainment and certainly, in the future, is bound to surpass what it has already done. This season has witnessed some of tv's top efforts in show business entertainment: the "Ford 50th Anniversary Show," the "Rodgers & Hammerstein Cavalcade," "Light's Diamond Jubilee," the "Spectaculars" and similar shows, together with the commercial introduction of color—yet they all proved one thing—*that fine as the entertainment values of television may be it has never yet reached—and in my judgment never will*—the entertainment heights of motion pictures. There is a very substantial and basic reason for this.

Motion picture entertainment is an end in itself. Television entertainment is not. Entertainment on tv is only a means to an end—a method of capturing an audience so that something else can be sold to it. Entertainment in motion pictures has no such ulterior motives and has only one thing to sell—itself.

Motion picture entertainment is concerned only with one arbiter—the public. TV entertainment is aimed at the same public, but en route, it must concern itself with several sets of completely extraneous judges—advertising agencies, sponsors, network executives, local station owners and Heaven only knows who else.

Hollywood takes full responsibility for what it puts on film for the theatres, but entertainment for television has to run the gamut of the Madison Avenue Messiahs, as well, as Fred Allen so aptly characterizes, the account executives.

When a motion picture producer thinks in terms of "audience identification," he thinks of the relationship between the people in the theatre and the people on the screen with respect to the story being told on the screen. In television, however, "audience identification" is something entirely different—it is the relationship between the audience and the product being sold—cigarets, soap, toothpaste, dog food, lipstick or anything else which the hucksters sell via the tv screen.

Sponsor Interruptions

The eagerness of the sponsor to get a sales message across to a captive audience results in a series of interruptions which almost completely destroy the audience's interest in what is happening on the tv screen. Commercials continually break up the continuity of the action and distract the viewers' mind and attention from the action. Once lost, that attention is extremely difficult to recapture. As a result, even if a tv show has started well and succeeded in capturing the viewers' early attention, it promptly proceeds to dissipate the hold it has on the audience by arbitrarily stopping the action and permitting a pitchman to hold forth. Entertainment goes out the window when sales talk comes in the door.

But even more important is the fact that television entertainment is suffering from the dread disease known as "quantityitis" in even much more aggravated degree than affected motion pictures in their worst days. The demands of incessant hour after hour after hour of programming has made live tv entertainment a mad week-to-week rush to get the show on—and off—and on to the next week's. Filmed tv shows may be produced at a slightly less hectic rate, but even at that, the producer of a single 39 half-hour film series for a season's production is producing the equivalent—in time or footage—of 10 to 12 feature pictures. And there are no geniuses in television—any more than there are in motion pictures—capable of turning out that much good film, single-handed, in a year.

Assembly-Line Production

We can hope that eventually tv will come to realize what motion picture producers have learned the hard way—that it is impossible to have both quality and quantity in entertainment at the same time. But that realization by television still seems a long way off, and so long as the motion picture does not try to make more pictures than it is capable of and concentrates on the quality of its stories, it need have no fear of being ousted from its position of entertainment leadership.

What I have said should not, however, be taken to minimize the great and increasingly important role tv will continue to play in the overall entertainment picture. In the first place, its on-the-spot coverage of sports and news events, its direct inquiry into what makes political and other leaders tick via its forum, the calm brilliance of men like Ed Murrow bringing the world into the living room, plus the advent of color, will make it a more potent factor to contend with than ever before. In my judgment, television is still far from having reached the peak of its potential. It has a tremendous future ahead of it—greater than most of us can conceive of today. And we can be sure that the men who guide its destinies will exploit its possibilities to the fullest degree possible.

Hollywood has no more cause for complacency today than it had 10 years ago when it was riding high on the crest of the war-inspired boxoffice boom. While television cannot compete with us in the kind of entertainment—drama, comedy, spectacle, musical—that we can put into our motion pictures, the showmen of tv can still give us a very tough run for public favor by concentrating on those things at which they excel. If we ever relax and fall back into the error of thinking that more pictures will serve us as well as better pictures—if, in short, we do not take full advantage of what the last half-dozen years have taught us—we will find ourselves dropping rapidly from the heights to the depths.

Perhaps five years from now I'll look back again and be able to quote a prediction I made in DAILY VARIETY which goes like this: "Having successfully met the tv challenge, the motion picture industry is today entering an era of quality production and real prosperity that will prove to be more substantial and solid than anything it has ever known before."

See you in 1960!

'What's Wrong With Reminiscing?'

By EDDIE CANTOR

Hollywood.

Critics have written, and friends have asked, "What's with this guy, Cantor, always travelling down memory lane?" Who am I—Drew Pearson, with "Predictions of Things to Come"? I don't care where I'm going—I enjoy where I've been.

Eddie Cantor

I've noticed, especially in television, that the guys in the trade who knock it, are constantly hunting up finales that embrace old friends—old dances—things of the "Gay Nineties" and "Early Twenties." One star who admonished me for going back in my memory book actually borrowed some of my old orchestrations for a show he was doing about the early days at the Palace.

Memories are roses in December, so I would like you to share the fragrance of this bouquet with me.

This is a story of a certain fan who waited for Al Jolson at the Winter Garden stagedoor back in 1924—a sweet old lady, about 70. She held Jolson's hand and wept as she told him, "Oh, Mr. Jolson, you are my idol—I love you so much. I'm just a poor old lady, and have nothing in the world, but when I hear you sing, you bring happiness to my heart. I save my pennies and nickels and when I get enough to buy a balcony seat, I come here to the Winter Garden to hear you. Mr. Jolson, if I only had all of your records, I could sit at home and play them and I'd be so contented." Jolson handed her a $50 bill and said, "Why, bless your heart, you go out and buy all my records." She kissed his hand, and thanked him profusely.

That night, after my performance in Ziegfeld's "Kid Boots," I met Jolson at Reuben's. "Jolie," I bragged to him, "I met the hottest fan a performer can possibly have. After the matinee today, a little old lady, with tears in her eyes, told me she loved me so much that just hearing my voice made her happy. Why, would you believe it, Al, she saves her pennies and nickels and when she gets enough, she spends the whole business on a balcony seat just to see me. If she only had all of my records, she could sit at home, and her life would be brighter."

Jolson started to chuckle. "I suppose," Al said, "you gave her some money to buy your records." "No," I answered, "I told her to go and see you—that your records were so much better than mine."

'Maxie The Taxi,' Circa 1919

Taxis have played an important part in my life. It was in the "Ziegfeld Follies of 1919" when I first appeared as "Maxie the Taxi." Several years later in a Winter Garden show, "Make It Snappy," I played this character in a sketch which was the hit of the show.

Last year a New York taxidriver sued me for a million dollars, claiming that "Maxie" was stolen from his book written in recent years. My only worry in connection with the suit was this: If you hand a cab driver a million dollars, what kind of a tip should you give him?

More than 20 years ago when I was playing at the Palace on Broadway, I was picked up in a cab by a driver who almost frightened me to death. Kept turning around and telling me jokes, perilously dodging the pillars on 6th Avenue.

I promised that if he would take me home without turning around, I'd listen to his jokes when we got there. I liked one of his gags and told him I'd use it at the Palace that night. If it got over, he could have $20. After the performance, there he was, waiting for me at the stagedoor with his cab. I handed him the 20 bucks. "I used your gag and it got a laugh." He said, "I know. I was inside watching you." This guy took no chances.

Several months later, Eddie Davis . . . the hackie jokester . . . got a job on my writing staff. He stayed with me for many years and finally left to do a show for Al Jolson, "Hold on to Your Hats," and the Broadway hit, "Follow the Girls."

His health broke down and he spent months in various hospitals. This resulted in his writing a book, "Laugh Yourself Well." The book is hilarious. Sample—he tells of his recuperation at a milk farm. "I drank so much milk that one day a big bull winked at me. But I really knew it was time to leave when I winked back."

I often think back to the year 1912 during an appearance in Knoxville, Tenn. I had some trouble with my throat and went to a doctor. After he treated me, he said: "Young fellow, do you know a girl by the name of Sophie Tucker?" I said, "Not too well, but she was the headliner here last week, wasn't she?" The doctor said, "Yes, but the way she uses her voice, that girl will be washed up in a year or two!" Well, that's 42 years ago. I don't know if the doctor's still around, but I just have to open my window to know that Sophie's still going strong.

I take my hat off to my leather-lunged friend of more than 30 years—not only for her ability as an entertainer, but for her energy. Vitamins ought to take her! Sophie will do two hour-long shows in an evening—between shows, autograph books and records (the proceeds for which go to her pet charities)—at four in the morning she'll have a big meal, and then play cards until 7 or 8 a. m. And Heaven help you if she's stuck $4! She'll play till she gets even! I know. Every time I play gin rummy with this dynamo, I lose—not because she's a better player—she wears me out! There comes a time when, even with *my* eyes, you can't tell a 10 from a queen—unless, of course, it's Marilyn Monroe.

This Tucker tot loves to kid the young performers. In Florida, on the same program with Betty Hutton, Sophie cracked: "Betty, Baby, long after you young convertibles have run out of gas, we old trucks will still be delivering!"

In 1917, backstage charities in the "Ziegfeld Follies," I first passed the hat. Someone had been hurt and we started a collection. Since then, the hats have become bigger and the collections tremendous. As a matter of record, in 38 years I have raised more than $250,000,000 for charitable causes.

I have used all sorts of methods to get your dough. Once in Philadelphia, Walter Annenberg, the newspaper publisher, invited me to speak at the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel. I got some laughs and some money, too—several hundred thousand dollars. I thought it was a good night until someone yelled out, "Hey, Cantor, what'll you take for that suit?" "Make me an offer," I replied. "$5,000," the man said. "Sold," I told him. "I'll go to my room, take it off and send it to you." "I bought it. I want it now," my customer demanded. Several persons jumped on the dais, grabbed me and removed the suit. Then I sold my sox, my shirt, my handkerchief, my tie and my undershirt.

The audience was screaming—and no wonder. I looked like a plucked owl. Wrapping a tablecloth around this gorgeous body of mine, I left the audience with, "Thank you, and here's a kiss from Gypsy Rose Cantor."

People in show business will tell you that, without a doubt, the nicest musician ever around the Big Street, was nimble-fingered, sensitive Eddy Duchin. Before he became a member of Mr. Petrillo's Union, he was studying to be a pharmacist, and while he never did get behind the counter of a drugstore, he had a surefire prescription for happiness: a way with the piano—and a way with people. He did the kindest things for everybody, and everybody, in turn, wanted to do things for Duchin.

"I'll always remember my 25th wedding anniversary. We celebrated at the Waldorf-Astoria. Eddy and his orchestra were playing on the Starlight Roof atop the hotel. Our party had just begun when the headwaiter brought me a note: "Can you use a good piano player at your party tonight?—salary no object—wearing tuxedo —have already eaten." It was signed, "Eddy Duchin." Ida and I agreed the most memorable incident that night was when Eddy played for us.

I miss the man, Duchin, and every once in a while I play his records. They reflect so much of his warm, sparkling personality and great artistry, that for an hour or so, I almost feel him in the room with me.

So I ask you, "what's wrong with reminiscing?"

The Reincarnation Of Independent Production

By ROBERT S. BENJAMIN

The subject of this article is not United Artists. It is rather the rebirth of the independent producer. But if parenthetical references to UA do creep in, it is not because of corporate immodesty but because it is a widely conceded fact throughout our industry that the regeneration of the independent is, in great measure, a by-product of the rebirth of U.A.

It is now an accepted fact of industry life that a most substantial part of the quality film production of our business is, at the present time, in the hands of independent producers. Contrary to past experience, this is true not merely at UA, the perennial "home of the Independents," but now at almost all of the studios in the industry.

This is so unprecedented that it is startling to recall that only four short years ago the Independent as a creative force was on the brink of extinction.

Who better remembers this state of affairs than we at UA?—for by what then seemed like the most unhappy of coincidences, we entered the picture just as the industry in general, and the independent producer is particular, were in the throes of a deep depression, both mental and economic.

Indie Once Almost Extinct

But trends in our business have a way of moving quickly and dramatically in either direction. Today, four years later, the cycle has revolutionarily reversed itself, and to an even more climactic degree. With one lone exception (and even this company has recently broken the ice) all companies are now warmly, and even generously welcoming independents *as* independents into their fold. Indeed, they are depending upon them for the bulk of their best films.

This metamorphosis, preceded as it was by still another, by which the new management at UA converted what for more than 30 years was merely a releasing agency, into a financing and distributing partner, brought the independent into so bright a spotlight in the production arena as to arouse much curiosity in the trade as to the status and future of the Independent producer. Many questions have been asked, and many editorials written of late—is he really Independent?; does he really enjoy creative autonomy?; is there a fundamental difference between the relationship of the independent and the financing distributor, and that of the creative employee and the studio-distributing company?; is the present high estate of the independent a shortlived one or is he here to stay?

For us at UA, where he represents the foundation upon which our structure rests, the Independent has a unique status. Once the commercial value of the project has been mutually appraised and agreed, by weighing the estimated costs against the picture ingredients, the producer with us is truly autonomous in his own field (production) and is a collaborative partner with a strong voice in our field (distribution and exploitation).

With so rosy a picture, one may well ask—why doesn't everyone become an independent? Why does anyone choose to work at a studio? Lest I be misunderstood, let me quickly add that not everyone should or could be a successful independent. Nor does everyone want to be. There are many who do not desire autonomy, who prefer to create under the supervision and guidance of a creative head of a studio. There is no doubt that for them the major studios make a most valuable contribution with vast physical facilities as well as creative collaboration and supervision.

But for those whose creative talents flourish best when they are unrestricted and autonomous, we at UA offer our organization and resources. Admittedly, there are risks in this philosophy but for better or worse the principle of permitting the independents to create independently appeals to each of us of the UA management.

So far it has all been for the better, for the number and quality of our independents (producers, directors, writers and artists) have grown from year to year since those bleak days early in 1951 to the point where 1954 has witnessed the highest gross ever achieved by UA in its 35-year history. And 1955 looms better still.

Yes, the independent is very much alive!

THE LAST OF THE SAMINOWS

By ED SIMMONS & NORMAN LEAR

It was early in July, 1965, that the cold war between the Agents and the Artists came to a head. Things had been smoldering for many years but the big eruption came when Calvin Kopkind, star of tv's "Make a Million," bashed in his agent's head with an applause-meter. Calvin had been resigned to paying his agent many hundreds of dollars each week—despite the fact that he, Calvin, had created "Make a Million," interested the network, sold the sponsor and personally negotiated every contract. He accepted this with a "well, that's show business" shrug. However, a few days after the latest Trendex announced "Make a Million" No. 1 in the nation, Calvin's agent came to him and casually said, "Calvin, old boy, I think the time is ripe to get your feet wet in television"—and at that precise moment, the applause-meter met skull with a resounding crash.

History has recorded the events that followed. Two days later, an unsuspecting public was horrified to read of the Madison Avenue Riots—in which 400 agents, 1,200 junior agents, two secretaries and an itinerant packager were strangled with 8,000 feet of telephone cord. In one large agency, four floors of grey-suited youngsters, hung from Old English racing prints by their black ties, with their black loafers dangling a foot from the floor.

As the news spread across the nation, smaller riots broke out elsewhere. Lou Brinkman, a Scranton club-booker, was found stuffed in his roll top; Max Wintz, the midwest's most powerful agent, was discovered dead on the balls of a tumbler's feet; Peter (Pete) Pritzker, known in the trade as an "agent's agent," was poisoned by a client, "Think-a-Nush" Helzeil; and Jerry Buchalter, who handled an act called Bigelow's Birds, was found pecked to death in an abandoned aviary.

Then, as suddenly as it started, it was all over. Calvin Kopkind issued a statement to the press: "We have completely annihilated the enemy; agents are no more!" There was dancing in the streets, the joy of peace abounded, and everybody was singing "When the House Lights Go on Again, All Over the World."

But this joy was not to last. Calvin Kopkind was wrong. The Agents were *not* all annihilated.

Royal Family of Agents

For many years, the royal family of artists' representatives was the Saminow clan—seven generations of showwise savants who, in their time, handled every major act in the business. When the Great War between the Agents and the Artists was at its height, and the agency that employed him was besieged by performers, young Moe Saminow took refuge in a filing cabinet and rested inconspicuously between the lines of a singled authorization. Since the opposing forces were notoriously poor at reading between the lines, he was safe. Towards the end of the battle, young Saminow—by now the Last of the Saminows—emerged from his hiding place. With startling agility, he attacked one of the raiders, beat him into unconsciousness with a large agency contract and then ripped out the package clause and stabbed him to death—for in this agency, the package clause was indeed a sharp instrument. He then quickly ripped off his somber greys and blacks, donned the multi-colored hues and suedes of the fallen artist, and infiltrated into the performers' ranks as half of a $350 knife act.

Once the infiltration had been accomplished, the Last of the Saminows became the most fanatic of the crusading Artists. Saminow was the loudest to shout—"down with the agents"—and then, as the Artists rallied blindly to his banner, he shyly tossed in his verbal coup de grace: "If we must have representation, let it be somebody from our own ranks!"

Thus, the Performers' Personal Representation Agency, run by and for Performers, was founded by Saminow. The grateful Artists, completely captured by the unselfish action of their new leader, chorused "we can't have you doing this for me—if you are going to represent us, we must vote you a salary." Saminow's reply only served to strengthen their love for him. "Keep your salary," he said bravely, "I cannot guarantee you work—therefore, I want no guaranteed salary. Let us instead work on some sort of a sliding scale—perhaps a commission!"

Moe Saminow became the world's only Agent—and in that capacity, he received 10% of everything. Every conceivable form of theatrical endeavor put 10% of its gross in the little canvas bags he sent out and mailed it to Saminow.

After a few months, it became too much for Saminow to handle alone and it became necessary for him to hire help. In one fell swoop, he solicited every college in the country for its most intense undergraduates and before the year was out, the Agents once more outnumbered the Artists.

But the Last of the Saminows was smarter than his predecessors. Knowing full well that the agency business could blow up again, he initiated a little sideline. Saminow had offices all over the world—and each office was staffed with a dozen or more agents. At first, his plan was to stock the office with fine furniture and furnishings, have the agents double as salesmen and place all the furnishings on sale. One slight switch, however, and a good idea became a classic. Saminow stocked the offices with fine furniture, had each office double as a showcase—and put the *agents* on sale.

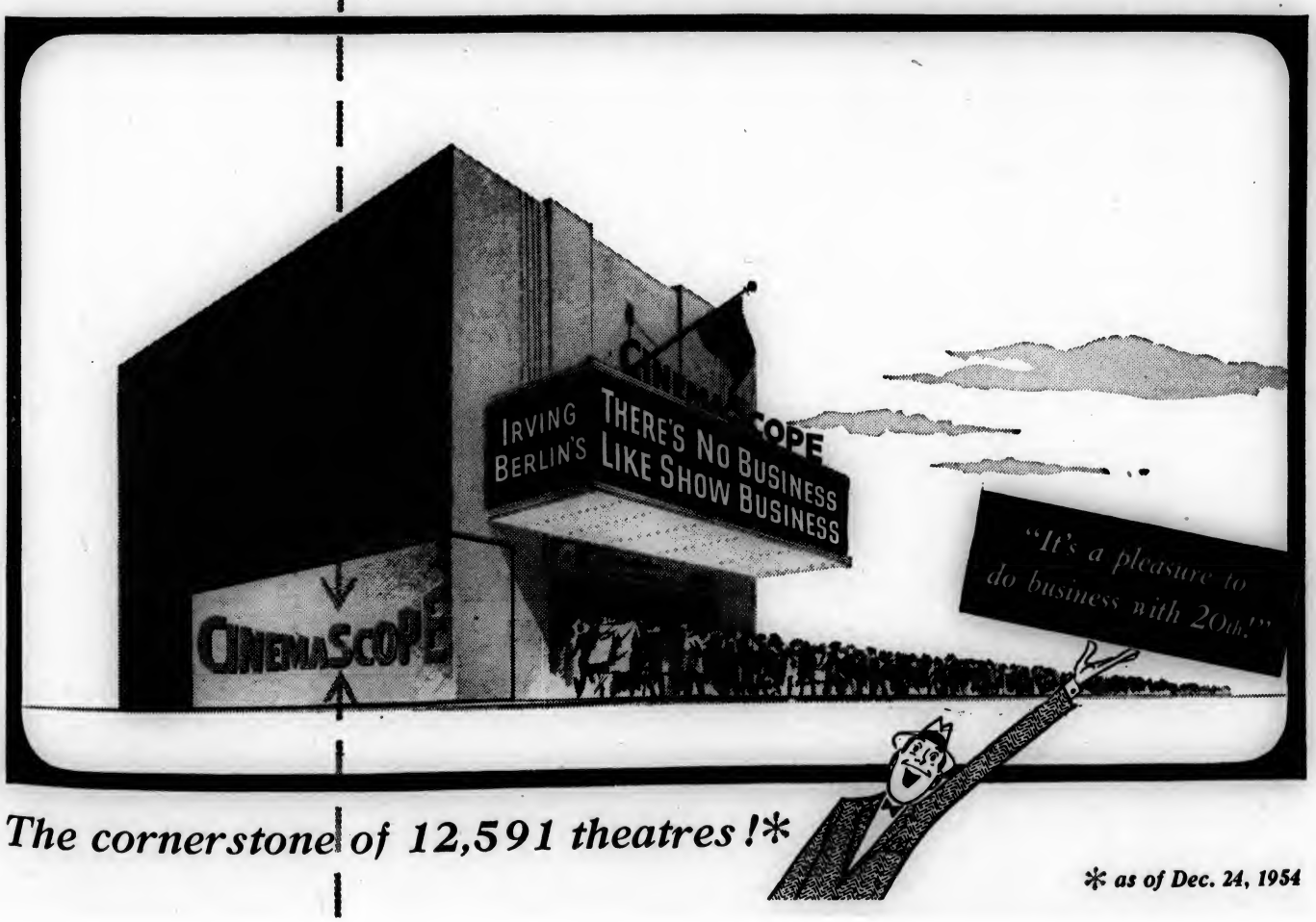
What a gimmick! In no time at all, agent sales were booming. Artists bought them for their charm bracelets. Some used them as book-ends. Others made them into hassocks and andirons. And a few, the practical jokers, just kept them around to confuse their friends. One chap used his just to pick up the phone when it rang and say, "Hi, Baby, I was just going to call *you*!!"

Soon, all the agents were sold and for the first time in the history of show business, each and every artist had his very own agent—which was the true beginning of the Golden Era of Show Business

And what of Moe Saminow, the man who made all this possible? Well, Moe received the call that must be received by all men—from that Great Packager in the Sky. But even the final call could not stop the Last of the Saminows. According to the latest teletype, Saminow has done it again. He has formed an indie motion picture company with all the w.k. Biblical characters and their first picture will be the life of Cecil B. DeMille.

We wish him well.

ARE YOU EQUIPPED FOR CINEMASCOPROSPERITY IN 1955!



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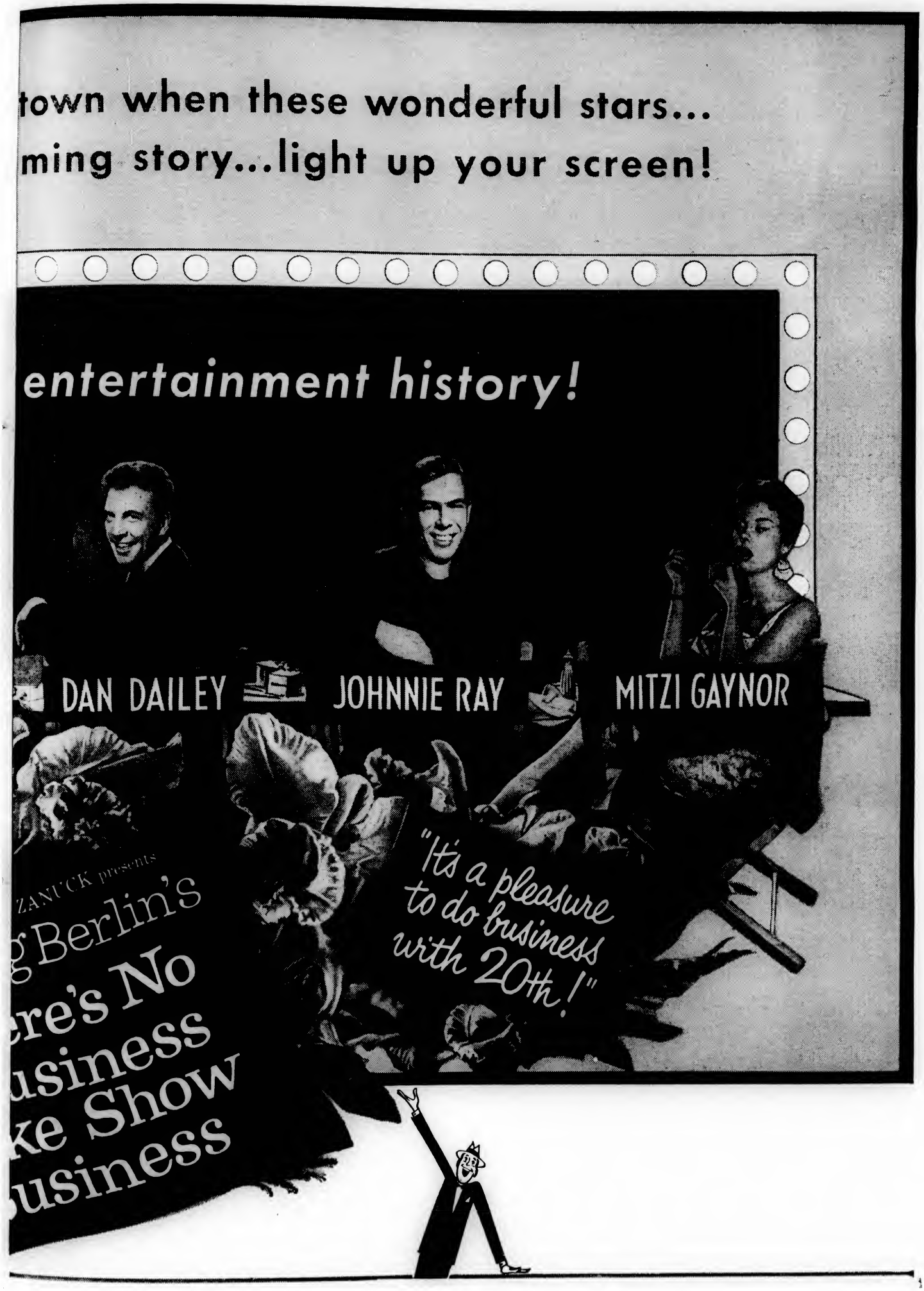
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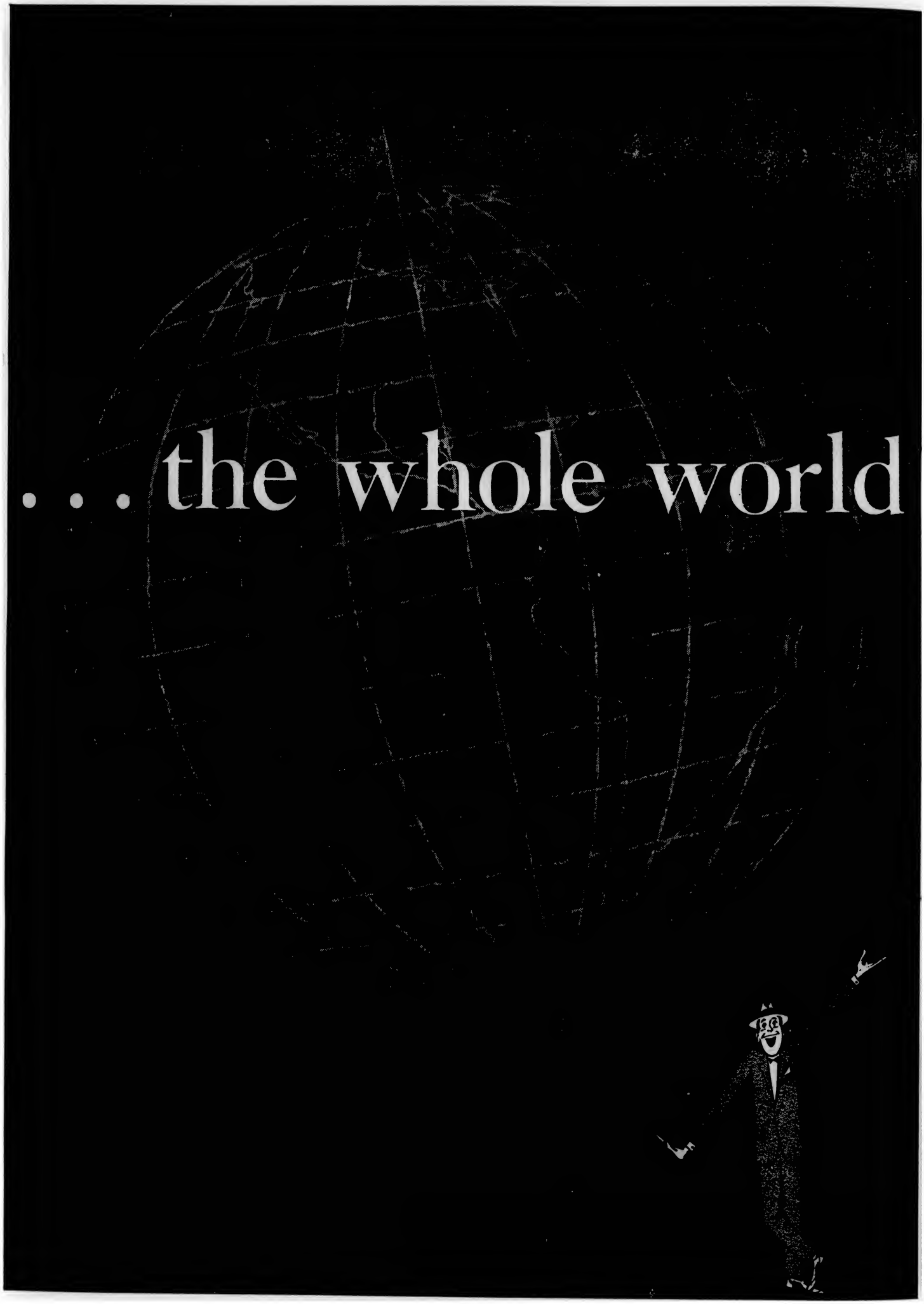
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"It's a pleasure to do business with 20th!"

Interstate's Topper Salutes Film Merchandising; Urges Industry TV Bally

By ROBERT J. O'DONNELL
(Executive V.P., Interstate Circuit)

Dallas.

In the good old days of block-booking, and even blocks of five, production and distribution seemed to feel that an exhibitor was entitled to a fair profit. Now, in buying them singly, and with almost every attraction, at least in the eyes of the distributors, entitled to advanced admission prices, they are definitely exacting every ounce of blood and leaving no margin for the pictures that just seem to miss.

Bob O'Donnell

We have for many years had a sliding scale that is rarely in effect as of the present date. Back in 1946, it was based upon 50% as much profit as film rental. These same figures today would not allow us 18% as much profit as film rental, but even these figures are frowned upon. Unless distribution realizes the situation, they are going to kill the goose that lays the golden egg.

We believe that we here in Texas were pioneers in tv advertising. In fact, we made a two-year contract and had quite a struggle to produce trailers and announcement cards that would have some sales appeal. We have continued this to this present day, and have found that on certain types of pictures it has a tremendous sales benefit. We think this is a question that has to be studied and based upon the individual attraction.

There is no question closer to my heart than that of an Industry-sponsored show. In fact, I have just returned from Hollywood, where I presented to the heads of all studios an opportunity to have one of the 90-minute spectaculars on the NBC network to be held on a Saturday, Sunday or Monday night, at our selection, some time in the spring.

I have run into some obstacles—No. 1, that we could not get a show ready in time for Jan. 2, which was NBC's first desire; we were all in accord that the time was too short. Our second obstacle was getting the Hollywood artists to work free on a sponsored program, which is contrary to their Guilds' present rules, and will eventually also apply even to the Academy Award Show.

The reaction of some of the studio heads was so strong and so favorable that they believe we should do an Industry-sponsored show, with the cost to be absorbed by Production, Distribution and Exhibition, and under that plan the Guilds would have no opposition to the artists working gratis. I am still hopeful that with the splendid cooperation of Y. Frank Freeman, who was chairman of the meeting, and the definite interest of Eddie Mannix, Dore Schary, Jack Warner, and many others, we will be able to arrange something eventually.

In my opinion, an Industry-sponsored tv show could be done in 60 minutes, in telling the story of the New Look for '55 and calling it, as NBC originally proposed, "A Salute to the Motion Picture Exhibitors of America," and I believe we could do a fantastic selling job.

Subscription TV 'Worst Thing Facing Industry'

While on that subject, in my opinion, subscription television is the worst thing that has ever confronted our Industry. The most recent request of the Zenith organization in Chicago is so alarming to me that I have called it to the attention of our Texas senators. I do not believe that they can place such wonderful pictures as "White Christmas," "No Business Like Show Business," "Vera Cruz" or "Desiree" on subscription television in any manner that would be comparable with the fine motion picture theatres, but I do know that motion picture fans are, to some degree, lazy and if they could see it at home, it would definitely ruin the first-run theatres of America and eventually cut off the supply of motion pictures, and we would become a dead industry.

By no stretch of the imagination do I believe that subscription television could absorb and pay for all of the top pictures, but they could certainly put us in a very delicate position as the narrow margin of profit we are operating on today could stand no such inroads.

As a threat, I believe it is the greatest monster we are confronted with, and it would eventually close 80% of the finer motion picture theatres in America.

Crack Merchandising

Distribution today, with men such as Jerry Pickman, Charlie Einfeld, Dave Lipton, Howard Dietz, Mort Blumenstock, Paul Lazarus, Max Youngstein and Perry Lieber are making tremendous contributions, not only to the advance sale of their attractions, but with the cooperation in many cities on our outstanding attractions.

We recently held a meeting at Delaware Water Gap at which a commitee was formed to study trends in advertising, and I recently read that my good friend, Elmer Rhoden, is setting up a research department.

Frankly, I believe that the rank-and-file theatres have arrived at a period when they should take stock and see if we can put some more excitement in our local selling. We are conscious of the fact that there is room for improvement.

Regarding the new production-distribution firms, I have great hopes for DCA and believe that the type of men connected with this group are sincere, hard-working showmen with a great deal of ability and who will gamble their own money and their tremendous experience and, therefore, must succeed. I am one of the few who has not signed up for the Makelim Plan, and personally I doubt that they will ever make a picture.

Having attended many recent exhibitor meetings where the great hue and cry was involving fewer and bigger pictures, it is my personal opinion that this was bound to happen. We, in the past, have made many changes of product simply because it was available. We find ourselves today attempting to book more intelligently and to get the maximum results and also again, being a single feature territory, so far there has been little of hardship on us, but it seems to be around the country. We feel it most in our small towns where we formerly made three changes a week, but with the constantly improved bigger pictures, we are finding ourselves able to run five or six days, and sometimes seven. And we believe we will be able to handle that situation again due to our being single feature.

Those Elastic Prices

The question of advance admission price pictures is something that I view with some alarm but, frankly, have no solution to. The week including July 4 here in Dallas, Texas, we had three advance admission price pictures. Whereas our normal prices were 70c, we were charging 95c for two and $1 for one. We had the biggest July 4 week in our history.

We opened "The Robe" at $1.50 and it was a mistake. After our four big towns, we reduced it to $1.25. We opened "A Star Is Born" at $1.25 and we believe it was 25c too much. Our greatest and most popular successful price is 95c, and the all-time record for paid admissions was "From Here to Eternity" at 95c, followed by "White Christmas," "How to Marry a Millionaire" and pictures of that type.

We have had very little objection to our constantly wavering scale of admission prices, but I do believe it has created some disturbance because, frankly, they never know what we are going to charge until they get to the boxoffice, or read our newspaper advertisements.

Under no circumstances do I believe that exhibition should have a voice in the type of pictures that Hollywood makes, for it has been proven to me that this is a highly specialized industry, and I would rather be in a position to state why a picture did not accomplish the desired results than to have been in the position of having had a voice in it.

Also, in my opinion, I believe it was a great mistake and a miscarrige of justice to have separated theatre ownership and production interests, and I am certainly one of the exhibitors that regret that it had to occur. Under the existing Department of Justice laws, I do not believe they can ever launch another First National organization.

We have in our group some very wonderful neighborhood and small town theatres, and we do not believe their trouble is based upon the big pictures or long runs, but is more based upon the fact that drive-in theatres with children free, double and triple features and, in some instances, 60c a carload, have put great opposition before a fine suburban theatre that is trying to run single feature, with a charge for children.

'Must-%' in Under-$1,000 Houses Is 'Confiscatory'

By BENJAMIN N. BERGER
(Pres., North Central Allied ITO)

Minneapolis.

As president of North Central Allied representing over 400 theatres in Minnesota, North and South Dakota and Wisconsin, mostly small town and suburban situations, and all small grossing theatres, I see our main problem the buying of pictures.

Every outstanding motion picture produced gets nationwide publicity. Followers of motion pictures, regardless of how small the community may be, are aware of the release of top pictures. These people in these small towns are desirous of seeing these pictures. But those 50% terms, coupled with the present high cost of theatre operation, a small grossing theatre can't possibly profit regardless of the greatness of the picture. When the distributors demand 50% from theatres which I am talking about, it is tantamount to confiscation. When the distributor refuses to heed the cries of the small towns for the abandonment of must percentage, the distributor's action must be predicated on either ignorance or a premeditated plan to destroy these men's life savings in these small situations.

There is need for the present theatres to continue operating and it is also smart business for the industry to make it possible for these theatres to continue to exist.

Pitch For Profit

I contend that every top motion picture should be shown in every situation in the land at prices that the exhibitor can afford and still come out with a profit. This demands the showing of top pictures regardless of the size of the community and the exhibitors should have them at their normal top prices so they can make a profit to take care of the blue Mondays, the rainy and snowy nights, the before-Christmas period, etc. If every top picture produced is made available to all the small situations on a live-and-let-live basis, these theatres would get sufficient product and their owners would be able to make a living. A great deal of the hostility of exhibitors toward distributors would vanish.

The irony of it all is that while this country is experiencing the best period in its history, and while the producers and distributors are having "diamond" hours instead of "golden" hours, at the same time the exhibitors are struggling for existence.

I am well aware that when a distributor representative reads this article, he will immediately say to himself, "That Berger and the people he represents are always crabbing." His second reaction will be, "Be dictatorial—what the heck is that group going to do about it? If they don't like our terms, let them get out of business."

My answer to distributors is: Remember you are dealing with human beings and you must do business humanely. There is a great deal of elasticity in a human being's mentality. A dictatorial and arrogant manner usually finds the kind of answer which distributors never thought of and which might be harmful to all concerned. While there has been some letdown on the must-percentage policy, there is still a great deal of it in existence. For good of your company and are business, let's get off the confiscatory must percentage policy for the smaller grossing situations. I consider a theatre that averages under $1,000 a week to be a small grossing situation. I have harped on this thing for many years because it is for the good of the industry.

H'wood Met B.O. Challenge With Fewer But Better Pix

By SOL LESSER

Hollywood.

For the past several years a change has been taking place in the motion picture business. This change was necessitated by competition. A new medium of entertainment had entered into the life and times of the people and was threatening the very existence of the picture industry.

Sol Lesser

The public was finding more and more time for leisure, and more money to spend on it. People were constantly searching for the best entertainment money could buy. Our industry learned by experience that only with quality could it hope to successfully meet the competition of other media of entertainment.

It has been pleasing—but by no means surprising—to see our industry leaders meet the challenge and again prove that we are worthy competitors. We have not hesitated to spend large sums on research and the development of new techniques and methods. More important, however, has been the realization that we cannot turn out our product on an assembly-line basis. We can only meet the competition by producing not fewer and bigger pictures, but fewer and *better* pictures. While this may have caused a shortage of product temporarily, it has enabled the industry to hold—and in some measure increase—the market for our product.

The exhibitor is complaining of a shortage of product. While this temporary shortage may have caused some discomfort, its ultimate result will be to make room for more individuals to give expression to their talents. The independent producer is now assured that his picture will have a place on the market. He has been encouraged by more readily available financing, and is striving to produce pictures of finer quality in order to meet competition.

The individual who may well benefit the most is the exhibitor, because he will be in a better position to meet competition with quality product.

Healthy Differences

While we're on this subject, I have no doubt that the exhibitor is within his rights to complain about terms, just as the producer has every right to attempt to recoup his investment. Both are legitimately seeking a profit. Actually, it is a healthy sign that there apparently is now something to argue about. There wasn't this much noise when the cash register was empty.

Still another healthy indication of the force of competition is the entry into the field of distribution of such plans as DCA and Buena Vista, which presage a gradual revision of the old methods of distribution which ultimately will benefit everyone in the industry.

The outlook is most encouraging. The grumbles and groans are actually only the sounds of a rusty machine once again beginning to roll. Competition is the fuel that powers this machine. A little oil applied judiciously here and there by the engineers and mechanics who have so faithfully tended this giant these many years will keep it in condition for the long road ahead.

Missing a Deadline For a Byline

—By ELLIOTT NUGENT—

Jamaica, BWI.

You see—when you asked me it was very early. We agreed, "like Christmas shopping—do it early!"

Then two weeks later it was Dec. 1 and I was still a happy working actor . . . ("7 Year Itch." Fulton, N. Y. Tom Ewell replaced me. All right I replaced **him** too if you want to get pedantic and factual. Road company also selling tickets —Eddie Bracken—end of adv.)—as I say I was working with live audiences and live actors . . . getting a laugh here and there . . . getting paid by my employers Courtney Burr and E. Nugent for talking steadily 16 hours a week . . .

Then on Dec. 2 I grabbed a passport, excused myself to my employers by mutual consent, flew to London. Purpose: to talk to an author, Mr. Paul Vincent Carroll. Mr. Burr, Mr. Bryam and I are presenting his latest play, "The Wayward Saint", for its world premiere in Boston at the Colonial on Jan. 27, '55. So I wanted to ask Paul a few $64 questions before I kissed off to Jamaica (W. I. not L. I.) for a brief holiday before taking up my directorial bullwhip . . . which I do on Jan. 3.

Well, somehow in the three days in London, Paul Vincent Carroll, failed to help me write a piece for VARIETY. He hardly mentioned it. Self-centered Irish type. What has he got that millions of others, like Shakespeare didn't have. I expect he won't help me with the direction much either. All he talks of is cast . . . cast . . . cast . . . like "get me Paul Lucas and I'll get you Liam Redmond . . ." stuff like that. No bylines at all.

Nothing But Everything

Well, then came Jamaica. Terrible place—Montego Bay, Hotel Casablanca. Lousy room with two beds, very clean, a bath, very clean—you know lots of help down there and no rush—sun shinging all day, moon shining all night. Boatmen going silently past your little balcony outside the bedroom in the hour before dawn . . . just cars clunking and a muffled voice or two as the stars fade out . . . keeps a fellow from getting at his work. No byline.

Then Haiti . . . This taxi driver name of Daniel Charles. He adopted us when we arrived. My wife Norma (Norma Lee, remember?) appeals to the nicer type of taxi driver, especially sweet guys like Danny with a real deep suntan from several hundred generations of exposure. So he works for us all day, all night for $15 a day. You see his four room house with his mahogany hand-made furniture cost him $35 a month. Rum costs $1 a bottle or in a good saloon 10c. a drink. So we found it was a good deal all around. We don't have to walk three miles down hill from El Rancho to Port au Prince . . . and we soon learned to forget the telephone—it's like early television—and he doesn't have to work again for a week after we leave . . . We saw Haiti. It looks good. No byline.

Well, sorry I missed out, VARIETY.

Film Old Reinhardt Play

Hollywood.

"Before Sunset," an old German play originally produced in Berlin by the late Max Reinhardt is to be filmed in that city. Co-producers are Gottfried Reinhardt (son) and Arthur Brauner.

Hans Albers is already signed for one of top roles.

'MAYBE 1955 WILL BAIL US OUT'

FILM FEUDIN' AND FUSSIN'

By ROBERT J. LANDRY

In many respects 1954 was an "abnormally" good year, a year of expansion, comeback, revived optimism and improved product and profits. It was a geared up and pepped up happy-happy time. Executives made cheery speeches, tradepapers published joyous editorials, even Europe picked up the beautiful music. You couldn't get yourself an argument hardly, except maybe at an Allied States convention, that the film trade was great, praise the Lord and declare the dividends.

But, of course, none of the foregoing should be taken, for an instant, as suggesting that 1954 was a calm year, or a year of harmony and serene reasonableness. The year was completely "normal" in the volume, variety and constancy of friction, feud and fuss. For example:

There were quarrels over labor featherbedding, distributor terms, exhibitor misquoting, Red shmearing; over arbitration with rentals included and over arbitration with rentals excluded.

Arguments raged about stereophonic sound, about bingo, about Mayor Wagner "hijacking" half the tax cut, about Dore Schary not crediting Louis B. Mayer and David O. Seiznick on the television.

Protestants complained that Catholics stole picture after picture by having the clergyman written as priests. Catholics complained that "Martin Luther" twisted history and offended dogma.

From first to last the debate continued concerning Howard Hughes and RKO; concerning the relative importance of popcorn and candy as compared with feature films; concerning playdates for colored films like "The Joe Louis Story" and "Go, Man, Go" in white southern theatres.

If It Sells, Seller Pays a Bonus

Exhibitors screamed that moving pictures was "the only business where the buyer pays a bonus if the item sells well." Distributors growled that if exhibitors didn't like the ground rules they went to the Dept. of Justice. Scores of theatres filed antitrust suits against distribs and distribs answered with conspiracy-to-defraud actions against exhibs.

Hollywood's Film Council was furious in 1954 against "runaway" production, as promoters invaded Italy, France and other countires chasing economy with a butterfly net. By year's end some of the co-producers were limping home to the U.S.A. with their posteriors in a sling.

Harry Brandt slammed Abram Myers during the year and Myers slammed Brandt. Memphis' crazy mixed up kid, 88-year-old Lloyd T. Binford, outlawed any motion pictures (1) about Jesse James or (2) with Ingrid Bergman.

Roy Brewer resolved that Dick Walsh was soft on Reds and unfit to govern the IATSE, but got nowhere. Europe had its own private war of techniques, Perspecta Vs. Stereo Sound. The Screen Writers Guild didn't like the Television Writers of America.

Operators of 80 firstrun houses in Buenos Aires hollered bloody murder when the union-favoring Peron Government forced vaudeville acts onto their stages and decreed the salaries must be paid. John Davis, the Rank man, was also hollering bloody murder against the failure of British features to get more playdates in America.

Harry Arthur campaigned against high admissions in the States and American exporters campaigned against Government-fixed low admissions (32c top) in Mexico. RKO's "The French Line" and UA's "The Moon is Blue" raised the charge of censorship while a Chicago bishop spoke of a "filthy avalanche."

Canada was sensitive about Hollywood releases, declaring "Saskatchewan" "an affront to the memory of early Mounties" and pointing out that no, but positively no, American GI's participated in the "Dieppe Raid," as Hollywood proposed to show.

Toward the end of the year 1954, when the fury had departed from sound, when censorship had reached and passed its sunset of absurdity, when schoolboys could all recite I scope-you scope-he scope, when Marilyn Monroe had scratched Joe Di Maggio, familiar voices became audible, voices which had once been shrill with accusation and abuse in early years of "normal" feuding and fussing: And what were they saying, these voices? They were saying, "Boys, maybe we made a mistake, maybe we should all go back to block-booking."

In short, the feuds of yesteryear acquire a sentimental halo.

INDIE EXHIB SEES BULLISH B.O. BIZ

By TRUEMAN T. REMBUSCH

Franklin, Ind.

Indiana in 1954 hit the bottom of the television impact on box-office swing, that is: We Hoosiers hope it is the bottom. We hear about the east coast, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles and other areas that hit the bottom and are now slowly swinging back, and since we were about one year and a half back of these areas in getting tv we hope the year 1955 will bring a swing to better boxoffice for Hoosier exhibitors.

Indiana has many two-theatre towns of the 6,-10.000 population category. Many of these towns have been seriously handicapped in fighting tv because of the product shortage. In many of these situations it has become necessary to close one of the theatres, converting it to business property, so that the exhibitor could cope with the product shortage and reduce payroll-operating overhead.

Frankly, the lot of these middie class motion picture industry citizens in 1954 has been anything but conducive to peace of mind. Looking back to 1950-1951 the records reveal many pictures that outgrossed the top grossing pictures of 1954. This is true even though since April—and most of us wouldn't be open if it hadn't come to pass—exhibitors here have been able to pocket the tax savings.

Confiscatory Terms

What has made it particularly difficult in 1954 is that the percentage of gross the exhibitor here must pay for film has increased to a confiscatory and destructive standpoint due to the short condition of the film market. Frankly there isn't anything the exhibitor can do about it but close one house for, as the old saying goes, you can't grind adding machine paper through the machines. What with the demands for 50-50 on pictures that, after they're bought, don't gross as much as pictures bought in 1950 or 1951 at 35%.

Then, too, there is a demand afoot to floor all scales at 35% even though many of the pictures today won't earn more than 25% on the scales, scales that have been

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Peaceful Coexistence For Pix Biz and TV

By ALFRED STARR

(Chairman of TOA Exec Committee)

Nashville.

It is becoming increasingly clear that there is no real conflict of interest between television and the motion picture theatre. Both will survive, both will prosper.

Alfred Starr

Each medium fills in a different way a human need for relaxation and entertainment. A large portion of the television audience must be restricted to short takes because of various distractions in the form of undeniable interruptions, such as those caused by children, by the telephone, and by neighbors. On the other hand, a considerable part of the motion picture audience is made up of just those people who want to find a temporary escape from those distracting interruptions, people who come to the theatre prepared to sit for a couple of hours, relaxed and undisturbed.

Much has been made of the fact that the tv screen is necessarily small and that the picture lacks clarity. Although steady improvement has been and will continue to be made with regard to both screen size and clarity of picture, it must be remembered that the television image must always be restricted to a single beam of light moving rapidly across and down the screen. Here is a built-in disability that can never be overcome, no matter how far research progresses. Compare the television image with the image on the theatre screen. In the latter case we have a series of still pictures of almost any size that can be imagined, projected with as much clarity and sharpness of detail as the human eye is able to appreciate.

Can't Supplant But Supplement

The two media are so different that it is impossible for one to supplant the other, just as it proved to be impossible for the radio to supplant the newspaper. The motion picture theatre could in fact make greater use of television in its role as a superb advertising medium. Television is the only outside advertising medium that can actually give the potential customer a sample of the product to be offered in theatres, and the different ways in which audience appeal may be stimulated by the use of television are almost incalculable.

What the motion picture industry really should do is make an all-out effort to present to the vast television audience, through a weekly 30-minute program on choice time on a national hookup, some continuing stimulation for patronizing the motion picture theatre. Such a program could be built around the idea of the film and its many uses, including such topics as a pictorial history of the motion picture, scenes from great pictures of the past, examples of the various techniques and skills involved in the making of a motion picture, and finally, selected excerpts from upcoming attractions.

All-Industry Pitch

Such a television program should be supported and paid for by the industry itself, with the Motion Picture Assn. taking the lead and with financial help from both Allied States and Theatre Owners of America. The Film Council of America should also be invited to participate, this organization being the central clearing house for all 16m educational, commercial and industrial films. Both the art and the craft of the motion picture could be dramatically illustrated on such a program, to the benefit of both television and the motion picture theatre.

When the television industry finally learns its own limitations and its own proper place, when the efforts of powerful financial interests to dominate the entire amusement field via television have spent themselves in futility, then it will be seen that the television industry and the motion picture theatre can peacefully coexist.

Good Pix at Fair Terms, Indie Exhib's Prayer

By JOHN A. GOODNO

(Palace Theatre)

Huntington, W. Va.

This business hasn't changed much—they still spend money on the big ones and cheat on the flats. Occasionally one comes through but now it's percentage which leads me to one conclusion—"How ya fixed for blades?"

The white hope of the industry is good pictures at fair terms.

Any device or thinking that violates this is fundamentally unsound and poor business and will destroy incentive.

Are the distributors now in the "nouveau riche" stage, grown suddenly fat on 70-30-10, aided and abetted by "shortages," artificial or real? Time will tell one thing for sure, there are too many lawsuits and it's beginning to look like this is the era of the lawyer and not the showman. Are we on the threshold of a Bigger Day awaiting only the combined cooperative efforts of all to push our industry forward to its former commanding and respectful position? Let's get going!

Some quick thoughts:

1. Pre-sold properties okay. Studio and ad heads working together for mutual interests of exhib. "Last Time I Saw Paris" (opposition) is a good example. Good thinking! Nice campaign.

2. TV is here to stay. Trailers should be prepared on all pictures worthy of advertising, just like

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JACK SHAINDLIN

SEASON'S GREETINGS TO ALL MY FRIENDS

STILL JUST SO MANY STARS TO GO AROUND

By J. J. FITZGIBBONS

(President, Famous Players Canadian Corp)

Toronto.

The new production-distribution firms will not have much effect on the overall business because of the simple fact that there is a limited number of properties, personalities and producers to make the quality we are asking for.

We do not think there is a deliberate effort to cut down on production. The creative showmanship of Hollywood is excellent and we believe the distributing organizations and the rank and file of theatres also do a good job.

As for types of pictures, the range is as great as the ability of writers and producers to transfer properties to the screen. People still love good music, laughter, spectacle and drama.

Excepting a few pictures where advanced admission prices are justified, the distributors' general sales policy to get higher admissions is a gimmick for higher terms because some other producer got them. This is the nub of much of the trouble we all are experiencing as exhibitors.

While subscription television is deemed inevitable in certain quarters, it may have the same effect on subsequent runs as the supermarket has on the corner grocery store. Twentyone inch images in a living room can deliver some very satisfactory entertainment but it cannot deliver the same effects that come from size, color and stereophonic sound. But I believe people would pay a toll for good pictures delivered to their livingrooms.

How Much Do You Want To Do It?

By BUDD SCHULBERG

It is now a pretty well known industry secret that "On the Waterfront" was turned down not merely by one but by practically all the major studios and that if Elia Kazan and I had not found a production ally in Sam Spiegel, a picture to which we devoted not months but years would never have seen the light of film projection.

Budd Schulberg

To say this may be considered in some unimaginative quarters as an attack on the film business. As the author of "On the Waterfront" I cop a plea when I say that I do not intend this little essay as a negative attack but as a capsule crusade for the consideration of a boxoffice quality that may possibly have been overlooked; artistic devotion to a particular story, subject matter, or theme.

American motion pictures are growing up: A heartening number of the year's film dramas, comedies and musicals testify to that. And the time may be upon us when the film writer is allowed to approach his work with the same integrity and high purpose with which a Faulkner sits down to the writing of his novel, an O'Casey to his play. When Kazan and I were in Hollywood a summer ago trying to "sell" our "Waterfront" project to the studios, it was commonly said that the background was too grim, the story too unrelieved, the labor issue too touchy. Now they and I are frankly hoping that the enthusiastic audience reaction to our picture will persuade more studio heads not to condemn a questionable subject matter out of hand until they have asked a magic question: "How much do you want to do it?"

When I tell my editor at Random House an idea for a novel, he does not say: "That won't go, too grim, it's the wrong time," etc." No, he's much more apt to say, "Wow, you picked yourself a tough one, but how much do you want to do it?"

Breaking Aesthetic Sound Barriers

The history of the arts—from the most primitive cave paintings to the latest extra-dimensional movie—is studded with glittering examples of men and women who broke through the aesthetic sound barrier out of indomitable conviction. Any number of great books find generation on generation of rapt readers because these books are able to transfer to their audience the creative excitement and wonders that went into their making. Pierre Besukhov and Emma Bovary first impress us as repulsive creatures hardly worthy of our attention, but Tolstoy and Flaubert's interest in them was so intense that these characters continue to live intensely in our imaginations.

For a long time the screenwriter has been a stepchild of the arts. Or as the Italian novelist, Alberto Moravia, describes him: "An underling in effect. (Screen writing) offers him little satisfaction aside from the pay. Often his name doesn't even appear on the posters. For a writer it's a bitter work."

In Kazan—and later Spiegel—I was fortunate in finding a collaborator who knew that the story, the characters, the theme and the dialog will make or break a film no matter how brilliant the direction or the acting may be.

Looking through my rosy crystal ball I see a new period for American films where the writer finally comes into his own as the equal of the director, and where the passion with which he answers the question, "How much do you want to do it?" can illuminate or beat material and transform it into critical triumphs that are for the very reason or their high quality boxoffice triumphs as well.

'Wire' Service

By HAROLD ROBBINS

The telephone kept ringing. Finally I couldn't take it anymore. "Answer the phone," I snarled. "Can't you see I'm busy working?"

He went over and picked up the phone. "Robbins' residence," he said. A voice crackled into the receiver a few moments . He looked up at me. "It's your publisher. He wants to talk to you. A picture deal or something on your new book."

"Okay, I'll talk to him," I said, reaching for the phone. "Pat," I said, "spare me the details, just send the check. I don't care what they do to the book."

"You wouldn't always be so broke if you didn't blow all your dough," Pat said. "Then you could afford to be careful about your properties. Make sure they get the right kind of treatment."

"Who blows their dough?" I asked, getting angry. "What poor writer hasn't got an estate in Connecticut?"

"I'm not complaining about that," Pat said. "But this new kick you're on. Having a butler answer the phone. That's wasted money."

"Butler?" I yelled. "What butler?"

"The man that answered the phone," Pat said. "He said he was the butler."

Suddenly I understood. I looked across the room. "Did you say you were the butler?" I asked.

He held his head a little on one side in that way he has and his bright button eyes looked straight at me. "What did you expect me to tell him?" he countered.

I hesitated a moment. It made sense. If he had told Pat the truth he wouldn't have been believed anyway. "So long, Pat," I said, putting down the phone.

I went back to my desk and sat down and began typing. I didn't speak for almost 10 minutes.

He sat down on the chair opposite me and watched me steadily. After awhile he spoke in hurt tones. "You're mad at me."

I shook my head. "No, I'm not."

"You are," he insisted with a half-whining tone in his voice. "You're angry at something."

I looked at him. I could always tell when he was upset. The tip of his nose was quivering, he looked as if he were about to burst into tears. "I just don't like the idea of you lying, that's all," I said. "I brought you up to be honest."

"But, Harold—" he protested.

"Look, I said. "When I took you in, I promised your parents I would give you a good home. Do you think they would like it if they found out you were a liar?"

This touched him in a weak spot. He was very proud and sentimental about his ancestors. He could trace them back further than I could mine. Sometimes I think that he thought it was one of the great injustices that I should know less about my ancestors than he did about his. Many the evening I had to listen to long and dull stores about the great achievements of his forebears. He began to cry in a thin dull monotone.

"Cut it," I said sharply. One thing I can't stand is tears. He stopped sniffling. "You won't be mad at me anymore?"

"No, I won't be mad. Just don't lie, that's all I ask," I said giving in to his plea.

His lips parted in a big grin, his buck teeth hung out like little white pearls. I couldn't help smiling back at him. He got out of the chair and began to cross the room and I went back to my typing.

The telephone began to ring again just as it always does when you're hot with an idea and in the middle of a thought. It was driving me nuts.

He came over and stood in front of me, looking up at me with those bright shiny buttoneyes. I didn't say anything. The phone kept ringing. Finally I couldn't stand it anymore.

"Answer the blankety phone," I snarled. "Can't you see I'm busy working?"

He jumped up on the chair and picked up the telephone. "Robbins' residence, Whiskers speaking." the wirehaired terrier said into the mouthpiece, his tail wagging like crazy.

THE IMPERFECT SQUELCH

By MAX SHULMAN

I may someday again write material for a night club comic, but before I do, I will make him pass one simple test: I will ask him to crack a soft shell almond with his bare hands. If he does it, I will forthwith refuse the job.

Max Shulman

Never again will I work for a comic with muscles. Only the puny and flabby, the thin chested and cadaverous, the sapless and debilitated, the faint and spent, will find my services for hire.

This resolution springs from a late unhappy attachment to a comic with biceps like granite, sinews like steel cables, and a latissimus dorsi that took numerous prizes. He would have been a great asset to the new Mae West act; in the act I wrote for him he was a public menace.

It is a condition of employment in night clubs that in every audience there will be at least one loudmouth drunk heckler. Comics deal with these louts in one of two ways: either they squelch them with acid retorts, or they studiously ignore them. Of course, what the comic would *really* like to do is walk over and belt the heckler right square in the mouth, but night club comics are by nature limp and unstrung organisms, as unaccustomed to violence as to daylight.

Not, however, my late associate. By inclination a direct actionist, by musculature a behemoth, he had a ready solution for hecklers: hit them. He would stand at the microphone and let two or three gibes go by without reply. The only indication that he was aware of the heckler was the rippling of his muscles under the tuxedo, the coloring of his face to a sort of blackish ruby, and the audible secreting of his adrenal gland.

When his patience finally ran out—sometimes it took as long as four or five minutes—he would make a polite excuse to the audience, leave the microphone, walk slowly to the table of the heckler, grab him by the shirt front, raise him to his feet, and give him a shot, the like of which has not been seen since Dempsey laid open Willard's jaw in Toledo. Then he would go to his dressing room to wait the arrival of the plaintiff's attorneys.

This conduct was, understandably, distressing to the comic's agent. Over and over again he explained to the comic that hecklers were a fact of night club life, and that he must learn to accept them. Over and over the comic made earnest promises that he would try. And over and over he clobbered them in the mouth.

Then the agent got a brilliant idea. He went to Lindy's to seek out a performer who was by common consent the world's greatest squelcher of hecklers. The agent explained the problem and begged the Great Squelcher for eight or ten slightly used ad libs that his boy might use against hecklers instead of shattering their bridgework. The Great Squelcher was moved to part with a dozen little dandies, which the agent transcribed on to a three-by-five filing card.

Before the comic went on that night, the agent put the filing card in the pocket of his tux and instructed him to use it in case of hecklers. The comic agreed and went out to start his act. He had been on only a few minutes when a heckler started working him over.

The agent saw the muscles swell, the head go crimson. "The card! The card!" he hissed to the comic.

The comic nodded. He took the card out of his pocket. The agent sighed and dashed perspiration from his brow.

The comic studied the squelches typed on the card:

"I thought I told you to wait in the hearse."

"Who brought you to this country—Frank Buck?"

"I never forget a face, but in your case I'm willing to make an exception."

"Mister, you wear that suit. It's sure to come back in style."

And other gems of similar ray.

The comic studied the card and came to a decision. He put the card back in his pocket. He walked over and belted the heckler right square in the mouth.

This, to the unconcealed relief of all parties, was the comic's farewell to show business. He is today a rigger for the Humble Oil Co. He is sometimes called The Great Squelcher of West Texas.

Exhib Becomes Distrib's Partner On Every Pic

By EDWARD L. HYMAN

(V.P., AB-Paramount Theatres)

The need in our industry for cooperation between producers and distributors on the one hand and exhibitors on the other cannot be emphasized too much. Although it is the producer and distributor in the first instance who has the responsibility of production and must use his best efforts to produce a boxoffice picture, it is the exhibitor who must realize that once the finished product is entrusted to him, he becomes the distributor's partner and must share the responsibility of obtaining the best results possible.

Ed Hyman

We know that no one tries to make anything but a boxoffice picture. However, there are times when we have very worthwhile and well-produced pictures, which, because of this special nature, need an individualized campaign. We also know that there are sectional preferences which must be considered in setting up campaigns on almost any picture, and who could know any better what these sectional preferences are than the local exhibitor who tries to cater to them 52 weeks a year. It is with this in mind that all distributors should be strongly urged to set up a system whereby cooperative thinking on the part of the distributor and the exhibitor can be utilized to obtain the best possible results on a picture which requires special attention.

We have had instances where cooperation between the distributor and exhibitor has been tried. The most recent and most noteworthy attempt is the Metro Workshop and this idea deserves unstinting praise. We urge that it be geared to an extent where every segment of exhibition and distribution can get in and participate.

Another instance of cooperative thinking was attempted in connection with Warner Bros.' "The Silver Chalice." We had seen this picture in Hollywood and felt it was a very fine picture. However, it does have a religious theme and requires individualized handling. Consequently when Warners decided to release "Chalice" on Christmas in several key cities, we suggested that they arrange a meeting in New York to be attended by their own advertising people from the home office and the field and by the advertising men of those exhibitors who would be showing it on Christmas. WB was impressed with this suggestion and followed through on it. The meeting was held about six weeks prior to Christmas and, as result of the combined thinking of the participants and the flavor of sectional preferences given to the ideas which are finally accepted, the campaign was, in our opinion, the best possible that could have been devised, and we are positive that the boxoffice results on the picture were helped to a great extent.

Of course, this is an isolated instance and the need for this kind of cooperation is far more embracing than that. This type of thinking should be used by every distributor and with all exhibitors in all areas of the country. Meetings of the kind that took place with respect to "Silver Chalice" should be the rule and not the exception.

All ideas of this nature should be worked out far in advance so that the distributor can have an opportunity to scrutinize his releases and inform the exhibitors of his plans, but it must be understood that, unless there is complete cooperation and participation, the beneficial results will be negligible.

ITALO FILMS STILL ZINGY

By ROBERT F. HAWKINS

Rome.

Upbeat is still the word that sums up the Italian film industry situation at the end of another favorable year. Practically all statistical figures for 1954 show a rise over those recorded a year ago, and the outlook for 1955 continues favorable in most departments. The coming year should indicate whether the Italian switch to production aimed internationally will pay off, and to what degree.

Feature production held at approximately last year's record 150 total, while the number of color items increased from last year's 55 to a predominant 80 for the past twelvemonth. Also up is Italy's overall film gross, from $148,000,000 in '53 to an estimated $165,000,000 for '54. Of this, the Yank slice will probably total about $84,000,000. The net-to-producer total of about $3,000,000 for the year includes a $21,000,000 cut to foreign pix, the remaining $12,000,000 going to Italian producers. A $9,000,000 net from export of about 1,800 film-units (up from a $6,750,000, 1,716-unit 1953 total) somewhat balances the Italian monetary situation in that sector, with "only" about $12,000,000 in film coin outgoing this year.

Italy claims the only continuous rise in number of filmgoers, with 1954 making no exception. Some 800,000,000 tickets were sold this year at Italian boxoffices, as against a 768,000,000 figure for the preceding stanza. This via some 12,000 houses.

Also on the rise in 1954 were taxes. These have doubled since 1950 and now constitute an average 30% cut of the tab. Taxes on de luxers on winter Sundays, when an automatic winter relief levy applies, sometimes reach an incredible 80% of the ticket price.

The 150 pictures produced in Italy during 1954 represent an investment of some $52,000,000, a rise of 15% over 1953's expenditure. Much of this coin went into such high-budgeters as "Ulysses," "Neapolitan Carousel," "Mamba," "Casa Ricordi," "Attila" and others, the first four of which have just gone into release with healthy initial returns. More such "big" productions are on next year's sked, with more and more local filmmakers pointing towards a fewer but-more-expensive productive basis.

Yet a large number of medium and small-budgeted Italian pix have stood up firmly to strong foreign competition, one example to beat them all being "Bread, Love and Dreams." Latter's phenomenal grosses, still piling up on Italian runs, have so far totaled an approximate $1,500,000 for the native swing alone. A follow-up of "Dreams," titled "Bread, Love and Jealousy," is a current holiday release.

—first seen by the public on October 14th, 1954, at the Radio City Music Hall's world premiere of "White Christmas" —has now proved itself a boxoffice plus in hundreds of engagements. Life Magazine reported that "it projects an enormous image with remarkable clarity." "Wonderful!" said Los Angeles Times. "Spectacular!" said Detroit News. "Better than anything yet!" said New York Post.

Paramount's second VistaVision picture, "3 Ring Circus," a Hal Wallis Production starring Martin & Lewis, is now playing to smash business across the nation.

In 1955, with the Paramount Studio converted exclusively to VistaVision cameras, the importance of VistaVision will be further extended toward increasing theatre attendance. In addition to the VistaVision productions presented in the foregoing pages, VistaVision's unparalleled realism and full-stage scope will dramatize the most eagerly awaited motion picture in production today:

CECIL B. DeMILLE'S
THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

IN VISTAVISION AND COLOR BY TECHNICOLOR
WITH THE GREATEST CAST EVER ASSEMBLED

Irving Berlin's

White Christmas

VISTAVISION Color by TECHNICOLOR

starring Bing Crosby • Danny Kaye • Rosemary Clooney
Vera-Ellen • Lyrics and Music by Irving Berlin

Hal Wallis'

3 RING CIRCUS

starring Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis
co-starring Joanne Dru • Zsa Zsa Gabor

VISTAVISION Color by TECHNICOLOR

VISTAVISION Color by TECHNICOLOR

STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND

starring James Stewart and June Allyson

MAMBO

starring Silvana Mangano • Michael Rennie
Vittorio Gassman • Shelley Winters

ULYSSES

Color by TECHNICOLOR

starring
Kirk Douglas • Silvana Mangano
co-starring Anthony Quinn

Alfred Hitchcock's

THE TROUBLE WITH HARRY

starring Edmund Gwenn • John Forsythe
and introducing Shirley MacLaine

VISTAVISION Color by TECHNICOLOR

VISTAVISION Color by TECHNICOLOR

Alfred Hitchcock's

TO CATCH A THIEF

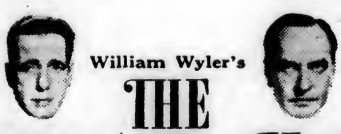
starring Cary Grant and Grace Kelly

Hal Wallis'

The Rose Tattoo

starring Burt Lancaster • Anna Magnani

VISTAVISION



William Wyler's

THE DESPERATE HOURS

starring Humphrey Bogart • Fredric March
co-starring Arthur Kennedy • Martha Scott
Dewey Martin • Mary Murphy

VISTAVISION

YOU'RE NEVER TOO YOUNG

starring Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis
with Diana Lynn and Nina Foch

VISTAVISION Color by TECHNICOLOR

Perlberg-Seaton's

THE COUNTRY GIRL

starring Bing Crosby • Grace Kelly • William Holden

James A. Michener's

THE

BRIDGES AT TOKO-RI

A Perlberg-Seaton Production
starring William Holden • Grace Kelly
Fredric March • Mickey Rooney

Color by TECHNICOLOR

CONQUEST OF SPACE

Color by TECHNICOLOR

RUN FOR COVER

VISTAVISION Color by TECHNICOLOR

starring James Cagney
Viveca Lindfors • John Derek

VISTAVISION Color by TECHNICOLOR

WE'RE NO ANGELS

starring Humphrey Bogart • Aldo Ray
Peter Ustinov • co-starring Joan Bennett
Basil Rathbone • Leo G. Carroll

HELL'S ISLAND

starring John Payne • Mary Murphy

VISTAVISION Color by TECHNICOLOR

VISTAVISION Color by TECHNICOLOR

THE

SEVEN LITTLE FOYS

starring Bob Hope as Eddie Foy
and co-starring Milly Vitale

THE COURT JESTER

starring Danny Kaye
co-starring Glynis Johns • Angela Lansbury

VISTAVISION Color by TECHNICOLOR

VISTAVISION Color by TECHNICOLOR

THE FAR HORIZONS

starring Fred MacMurray • Charlton Heston
Donna Reed • Barbara Hale

LUCY GALLANT

starring Jane Wyman • Charlton Heston
co-starring Claire Trevor • Thelma Ritter

VISTAVISION Color by TECHNICOLOR

YOUR BUSINESS WILL CONTINUE TO THRIVE IN 'FIFTY-FIVE WITH MORE BLOCKBUSTERS FROM PARAMOUNT

As exhibitors look back at 1954, Paramount has been their leading source of boxoffice pictures. As they look forward to the New Year, Paramount has amassed the most impressive wealth of completed product ever made available to theatre operators. From these pictures will come the great new boxoffice records of

1955→

IMPORTS IN U.S.: ALL NEW SCENARIO

Selling Cinemascope, or Man Among the Anamorphs

By S. CHARLES EINFELD
(Ad-Pub. V.P., 20th-Fox)

Just a few days short of two years ago, Messrs. Spyros Skouras, Darryl Zanuck and Al Lichtman took a good hard look at the shape of things to come, movie-wise, and decided to try to change it. Nine months later, the change was a reality; since then, the CinemaScope revolution has sparked a renaissance of creative motion picture development.

Even a revolution, though, needs to be sold. Undersell it, and it fails to come off; oversell it, and you find revolution followed by black reaction.

In the industrial-education world, they have a standard operating procedure known as the PEDAED formula. Preparation, Explanation, Demonstration, Application, Examination, Discussion. In selling CinemaScope our job was essentially educational, to begin with. We followed the PEDAED formula.

The medium was revolutionary, but the promotion followed that tried and true formula. First we prepared the filmgoing public and the industry by announcing as loudly and determinedly as we could that we had something brand new in mass moviemaking. Then we explained what CinemaScope was; we didn't try to hold anything back, or talk in vague terms. We put all our cards on the table, describing and diagramming how the anamorphic system worked.

Word of mouth can be the most wonderful promotional tool of all. We demonstrated CinemaScope to set the words going from the maximum number of viewers' mouths. And then we were ready for the biggest job of all—the application of the new anamorphic, stereophonic technique to a specific story property.

"The Robe" was that big test. Here we decided to concentrate public attention not only on this big first picture, but specifically on the first showing in the first theatre on the first night. That's why the Roxy Theatre premiere was not preceded by the usual round of critics' screenings or projection room shows. We didn't want the good word about this new thing to dribble out—we wanted it to explode in headlines and newspaper accolades first, then percolate at boiling heat all through the movie marketplaces.

Don't forget that CinemaScope had to be sold twice—to the exhibitors as well as to the public. We were asking exhibitors, at a time when they didn't know whether they could manage to stay open, to invest thousands of dollars in new screens, new stereophonic sound systems and new projection apparatus. It was a lot to ask.

The 'PEDAED' Goes Forward

As part of that double-pronged selling, we bought advertising space, naturally. We bought it where the selling message has immediacy for the customer; frankly, we bought it where we could also afford to buy it—in the newspapers and trade papers and periodicals where the impact of what we had to say would be concentrated on the people to whom we were talking.

Television is a terrific advertising medium; it is also terrifically expensive, particularly for a fleeting product like a motion picture. We could pinpoint a tv campaign for the New York opening of "The Robe," but only as an adjunct to other media. Basically, the television format was nowhere nearly as adaptable as the newspaper for our selling of CinemaScope. We changed the shape of the ads in the newspapers, to give a stronger suggestion of the aspect radio of CinemaScope. The design which we adopted for the word CinemaScope itself, curved in a perspective rendition of the CinemaScope screen, was much more graphic on the printed page than on the narrow confines of a 17 or 20 inch picture tube.

But we used the picture tubes—we used everything we could get, from tv to telegrams. And above all we sold CinemaScope with CinemaScope. Al Lichtman's distribution force did everything but build theatres to give as many people as possible a chance to see CinemaScope.

That brought us past PEDA and up to ED—examination and discussion. Examination of CinemaScope by the public and by the exhibitors was pretty thorough. You have only to look at the grosses of "The Robe," the first CinemaScope picture, to know how many millions of people decided to look at this new kind of picture for themselves. But examination was a process also being carried on by the "teacher," 20th Century-Fox.

We faced a selling decision after "The Robe" scored its smash success. The decision was this: should we stand pat, should we say this is only the beginning and keep improving the process, or should we improve it but say nothing about the improvements for fear of disturbing existing attractions.

Anyone who knows Spyros Skouras knows the answer that had to be made. A. We wouldn't stand pat. B. We wouldn't keep quiet.

So part of our selling campaign, after CinemaScope came on the market, was to let everybody know that the best was yet to come. We demonstrated the new improvements just as widely as we had demonstrated the original CinemaScope and we encouraged discussion.

We felt that it was healthy to have controversy about CinemaScope; it added to the public awareness of this new force in film entertainment. We saw no great risk, because we had confidence in our product. And we remembered all the people who used to say that talking pictures would never replace the old silents. So we frankly did our best to encourage discussion; we were knocked over the head a few times in the process, but in the course of this rugged hullabaloo CinemaScope became the biggest movie star of them all. And they spelled the name right.

There's only one thing left to stress. I've described our selling technique in the past tense, and that's wrong. CinemaScope has turned out to be tremendous boxoffice, but that doesn't mean we can rest on our laurels. Instead, it means that we have to maintain at least the same level of selling from here on in, mindful of the old adage that when you stop selling, the customers stop buying.

Tickets, anyone?

Foreign Films Now Open in Western Territory, Move East to New York—Censorship, Critics, French Demands For Big Guarantees All Complicate New Economics

By NOEL MEADOW

The scratch-sheet of any informed handicapper of foreign-language films will indicate that the heaviest play for 1955, aside from the French and Italian, will be given to Japanese, German and Swedish imports.

The Japanese scored first with "Rashamon," a sleeper that bowled the critics over. Then the Nipponese came up with the impressive "Ugetsu" and followed through with "Gate of Hell." Other pictures out of Tokyo are expected among the product to arrive during 1955, and the State Dept. is praying they'll all click. The U. S. knows that only through a prospering Japanese export business can we expect to get off the very large nut to which we are committed by way of frank subsidies to provide the Japanese with eating money.

German studios are pegging right along, aspiring to get back into the prewar groove again, qualitywise. Now relieved of the official need to distort stories to keep a Propaganda Ministry happy, German film-makers are beginning to exercise a sense of freedom and living-it-up spiritually—in the Western Zone anyway—that many of them had all but forgotten.

Germany has 20 to 30 films available for release in the U. S. in 1955, and it's counting on their integrity to dissipate the remaining pockets of anti-German feeling in this country.

Sweden has ambitious plans for U. S. distribution in '55, and will implement them with 10 or so films now on the export schedule. Sweden has always trailed in the race for the American market, mainly because its product has been numerically scanty. It did hit in past years with "Torment" and "Miss Julie," but Swedish film-makers started to flex their muscles and utter Tarzan yells with the current "Illicit Interlude" and "One Summer of Happiness." The latter is now en route to New York, having opened in the hustings. "One Summer" is going strong in cities outside New York, and the distributor prefers to tap it for profits in the provinces before he gets strong enough to face possible censorship troubles when it reaches New York State.

Also due for a N. Y. premiere is "The True and the False," first English-language picture made entirely in Sweden, starring Signe Hasso.

French Films Quality Down As Guarantees Skyrocket

One thing is for sure: U. S. distributors, so far as French films are concerned, have "had it." They refuse now to "be had." The Frenchmen, mistaking the success of some excellent French films here for a signal for sky's-the-limit dickering, have virtually killed themselves off. Their avarice would be endured, though resented, if they were coming through with some big pictures, but French quality has slid downward generally as advance guarantees have rocketed upward.

Only a handful of U. S. distributors can compete at those prices, and even some of those who can, don't want to. The number of distributors for all foreign-language films, incidentally, has fallen off sharply, what with mergers and just plain folding. For most of those staying with it, it's just bread-and-butter, and their offices now sport decor that's this side of austerity.

The past year has seen Itallan Films Export forge ahead dramatically here, keyed by some wonderful promotion that took no dust even from the top-drawer West Coast hucksters. Of course, IFE pitched along an important groove—Gina Lollobrigida's endowments—but results were really something to inflate the chest over. Some exploitation theorists object to the limited Gina approach, but the IFE boys considered these objections carefully while, as they say, on trips to the bank.

Looks Like Italy Will Pick Up, France As 'Influence Sphere'

IFE is likely to figure large in trade news in 1955 because of its invasion of the French market, which it seems ready to take over as a sort of sphere-of-influence. IFE is in position, financially, to get an appreciable portion of the French output, and distributors here, complaining about their elimination as competitors for French product, are muttering about running to the law books dealing with restraint of trade.

British films continue, of course, to do well in the U. S., mainly because of no language barrier, but also because tv's captive audiences—voluntary captives, it's true—have attuned their ears to the cockney and other dialects and are actually getting to like them. Not to be ignored is the rather important item that English motion pictures are often of high calibre and U. S. audiences are getting mature enough to appreciate the difference. Some professional film-viewers also hold that British producers, increasingly sensitive to the American market, have been getting their players to modify their accents to make their lines more comprehensible to us.

Television Rights May Develop If Lip Sync Doesn't Kill 'Em

If foreign film distributors have had any illusions about picking up some fast tv rights money—and many did—those hopes have gone aglimmering. There's no appreciable market for foreign-language films, as they are now offered, and there's not likely to be. However, several hundred films in centers all over the world—in a number of languages—are presently being dubbed in English, which may give them a fighting chance on tv if audiences can get adjusted to the disparity between sound and lip movement.

One of the troubles besetting the industry is that it has no really big names to carry it over the rough spots. Once there were stars with personal followings and surefire marquee value—Harry Baur, Raimu, Louis Jouvet. They've all passed on, leaving—and on a lower level of popularity—Fernandel, Gerard Phillipe and Michele Morgan as among the best available name-draws. In this department, the year's champ is of course Lollobrigida, who works in both Italian and French films.

The most striking change in distribution technique in the past year has been the tendency to de-emphasize the New York premiere and start foreign pictures out of town. While once the hinterlands booked on the strength of a film's N. Y. acceptance, distributors have reversed the sales pitch and are seeking favorable terms for a N. Y. showing on the strength of reception accorded a film out of town.

Major American Studios Suddenly Compete for Artie Playdates

There are at least two reasons for the switch—dwindling availability of New York art houses that can best accommodate a foreign film, and tough local censorship as compared without of town, if any.

Foreign film distributors, even in their flights of fancy,

(Continued on page 47)

What D'Ya Know?

By PETE SMITH

How is your theatrical I. Q.?

How many of the below 25 famed comedy bits and/or routines can you identify? No fair peekin' at the answers in the small print.

1. Name the vaudevillian who sat on a chair atop five tables and teeter-tottered until the tables collapsed as the comic jumped for safety.

2. What tramp character in vaudeville cautiously approached what appeared to be a coin on the stage? As he attempted to pick it up, he found it wasn't a coin as he wiped his sleeve with "it."

3. A famous silent star appeared in a picture as an admiral, proudly standing on the deck of his new ship. The latter was launched and slid into the water, continued under water and completely disappeared—admiral 'n' all. Name the silent star.

4. Who is the after-dinner speaker who murders the King's English in his monolog as "Professor Ganzamocher"?

5. There was a chap in vaudeville who would yell "Spot-Light" to the house electrician while the latter deliberately avoided "hitting" the comic who was left in the dark. Who was the comedian?

6. A vaudeville single would give his impressions of small town folk. He later became famous for writing "The Specialist." Remember him?

7. There was that little guy in vaudeville who used to lie in the footlight trough, munching on an apple or eating a sandwich while singing a heart-rending ballad about his mother. Who he?

8. On whose radio show did a character named Orville Sharp played by Sheldon Leonard make famous the phrase, "Am I correckit?"

9. There was a double act—two men—in which one did a blowzy, brazen "broad," with a barroom voice and dialog to match. "She" sported a fiery red marcelled wig and featured a vulgar display of jewelry and wardrobe. Name the team.

10. A comic appeared in the audience with a loaded rifle, demanding that his female partner on stage receive an ovation following her vocal efforts . . . or else. Who was the comic?

11. Who was the comic noted for his golf and pool routines in the "Ziegfeld Follies"?

12. Another "Follies" performer became famous for her "Baby Snooks." Her name?

13. A popular comedian earned a new distinction emceeing Academy Award shows. Later for such efforts he was presented with an Oscar. Name him.

14. Remember that hilarious trick auto in "Knock on Wood?" Which comedian used this prop for much merriment ?

15. In a riotous movie, one of the highlights took place in a small cabin wherein crowded several passengers, the ship's personnel and four hooligans who instigated the commotion. Name the four.

16. A great Broadway star and a baby using a bowl of cereal as a prop, caused loads of laughs in "Sitting Pretty." Who was the star?

17. A very funny travesty on "This Is Your Life" was recently performed by a tv comic who formerly teamed with a popular tv comedienne. Can you name the comic?

18. A comedian of an earlier day was billed as "The Mad Magician." For one of his stunts he would have a stooge hold a piece of ice throughout his 20-minute routine. Who was "The Mad Magician"?

19. One of the funniest skits in a "Follies" show featured an osteopath's office, with the patient taking a terrific beating. Name the patient.

20. Remember the "Jack" story, the plight of an auto owner who has a "flat" tire 10 miles from a gas station on a rainy night and finds himself without an auto jack? Who does this bit?

21. A dialectician—one of the tops of all time—tap dances while sitting on a chair. He often appears on the Jack Benny show and has popularized the plaintive line, "I dunno." Remember this fellow?

22. Which comics have built a career around a taxicab company?

23. Who were the actors known as "The Two Black Crows"?

24. Name the chap who has used a routine called "Guzzler's Gin."

25. Who's the guy who has taken thousands of falls in Pete Smith Specialties, released by M-G-M?

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1. Bert Melrose; 2. Joe Jackson; 3. Buster Keaton; 4. George Jessel; 5. Herb Williams (& Wolfus); 6. Chic Sale; 7. Bert Wheeler; 8. The Perkins Show; 9. Savoy & Brennan; 10. T. Roy Barnes (Crewford); 11. W. C. Fields; 12. Fannie Brice; 13. Bob Hope; 14. Danny Kaye; 15. 4 Marx Bros; 16. Clifton Webb; 17. Sid Caesar; 18. Frank Van Hoven; 19. Eddie Cantor; 20. Danny Thomas; 21. Benny Rubin; 22. Amos 'n Andy; 23. Moran & Mack; 24. Red Skelton; 25. Dave O'Brien.

Prod. Eclipses Exhibition On Showmanship: Rhoden

By ELMER C. RHODEN
(President, National Theatres)

Hollywood.

You asked a very important question: "Do we think there is too much concentration on pre-sold properties?" From the exhibitor standpoint, there can be only one answer and that is, "No." When the public is so selective in the type of entertainment it will buy, we must rely on pre-sold properties. On a property not pre-sold prior to its production, it must be pre-sold prior to its release.

Years ago when an exhibitor could buy pictures a year in advance he couid do long-range selling on his own. Today when pictures must be completed, sereened, and auctioned off to the highest bidder, the exhibitor has no opportunity of long-range selling. As a result of this change in distribution, the job of pre-selling, unfortunately, is the responsibility of the producer. This being the case, theatre men must devise a medium of advertising that is more immediate. We have to sell quickly, and many times must do the job in one burst of advertising effort. No longer can we depend on a series of teaser ads —time does not permit. That is why our company, National Theatres, is going into researeh to find out what medium is the fastest and the most effective as to creative showmanship.

The Hollywood studios are showing greater strides, in my opinion, than the ranking exhibitors. This statement may create loud and long resentment on the part of exhibition, and I believe the previous paragraph pretty well explains why showmanship has been taken away from the exhibitor and placed in the hands of the studios. As proof of this statement, motion pictures are booked in the theatres throughout the country with scarcely any films? That being the case, we have no choice in the

We like the trend of fewer and bigger pictures. Isn't it a faet that the public is no longer interested in the average picture?—that they only patronize the outstanding advertising material available. The fault lies in the shortage of product—so rather than close a first-run theatre, we in the theatre department accept bookings even though we know that little advertising material is available. As Holiywood catches up with more quality pictures, it is hoped that more creative showmanship results for the theatre end of the business.

Public Decides on Quantity

matter and must encourage the present policy of bigger pictures. But it doesn't seem to me that we should ever subscribe to the theory of fewer pictures. What we want is more great attractions!

Another very important question asked is whether the industry should sponsor television shows. "Yes"—by all means! We have already seen the tremendous power of national television advertising on pictures. At the moment Walt Disney is doing a tremendous job on his picture "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea." His approaeh has been very intelligent and it will create public interest on the part of the moviegoer. The result, of course, will prove conclusively the value of television advertising. As to local advertising, our experience has been that it is too costly for its effectiveness.

I would like to make one further observation in regard to more cooperation between produeer and exhibitor in the developing of more personalities. True, the story is of all importance. Intelligent production is also vital, proper easting is a must, but it seems to me that with a good story, good produetion, and a good east, we as theatre men should be able to sell an outstanding film without a top personality. At the moment there are only a dozen personalities, at the most, whose appearance in a picture actually means money in the boxoffice. That is very unfortunate, and even these few personaiities have no dependable pulling power, as the grosses on their pictures fluctuate with the entertainment value of the individual picture. The personality problem has been with us since the inception of our business. The list of important boxoffice stars has been narrowing down for years, so we in exhibition will have to shoulder the responsibility of selling new personalities—and here is where a better understanding between the producer and exhibitor can bear fruit!

Relax Fellers

By JOHN BYRAM

I write this from the smoking room of the Queen Elizabeth. All is tranquil with that twilight peace and serenity that somehow descends over a great ocean liner late in the afternoon. Many of the passengers are still in the cinema viewing a picture which I happen to have seen in New York. The trappings of high tea are being carried away from the Grand Lounge, and from it drifts strains of relaxing music — Strauss and Lehar waltzes, rather well played by the ship's orchestra. In the smoking room, McQueen and his able corps of stewards are setting up for the cocktail hour. Ahead of me and most of my fellow passengers stretches the inviting prospect of a nap, a hot bath, or perhaps a dip in the pool, followed by a dinner filled with almost any kind of goodies that our appetites and imaginations may conjure up.

Assuredly this is a most pleasant and otiose prospect for anyone to contemplate, and yet in my various reeent trips to Europe, I have been amazed and astonished to find a whole new generation, grown up since the war, which knows not the delights of ocean travel. Ask these people why they go by piane and they will give you the same answer—speed, obviously. This neeessity for getting from here to there fast is one which frequently and sometimes urgently exists, but not always. We Americans all know the mania for jumping into the family car and batting along like hell without knowing what to do when we reach our destination.

I harbor no prejudice against airplanes, which, come to think of it, is rather big of me. In fact I have had some extremely enjoyable trips across the Atlantic by flying machine, even if it did take a day or two to recover, and their crews and personnel are among the pleasantest and most efficient people on earth. But sueh a flight is in essence a long bus ride, and no matter how hard the boys try to trick it up with their free champagne and orchids for milady, etc., they can't give you real luxury. Unless in your estimation real luxury consists of being cramped in a narrow berth and eating a meal off of a tray in your lap. The downstairs lounges are nice, but after all, how big a pop palace can you get on an aircraft?

Before the plane engendered a compulsion to get from N. Y. to L. A. and N. Y. to Europe in a matter of hours, things got done just about as well and efficiently. I doubt that Adolph Zukor, for example, would admit that the picture business ever lost money because someone had to take the 20th Century Limited instead of a Constellation. And I'll bet that no Wall Street to Lombard Street deal ever blew up because the International Banking Set had to ride on the water instead of over it.

What does all this prove? Nothing I suppose, except to say—relax fellers and enjoy it while you can. A columnist who writes from Paris, and whose vogue is eurrently great, said wistfully to me the other day, "Gee, I've never made a voyage by ship and I hope that someday I can." Art, dear boy, just try it.

Kernel of a Tune

This is one of my pet Jerome Kern stories.

When Jerry was doing musicals on the Coast he was finishing the score on an assignment and brought in one of the songs, which later became a hit and is now what we boys call a standard. The producer listened to the song and out of respect for Jerry, plus the fact that the song was interesting, said: "Jerry, I like the song very much but don't you think it's a bit short." The song was a 16 bar chorus. Jerry, cocked his little head to that usual 45 degree angle and gave the producer that Kernesque devastating eye and softly shouted, *"That's All I Had to Say."*

Harold Arlen.

After Wide-Screen: What?

By DR. ALFRED N. GOLDSMITH

No one ean deny that a good job has been done in developing wide-screen photography and theatre projection.

In faet, so many good jobs have been done in this field that the situation is confusing to many exhibitors. Many a theatre owner probably wakes up in the middle of the night in a eold sweat surrounded by expanding and contracting Aspect Ratios, capering Sound Traeks, and bobbing and weaving Optical Systems. A vast Curved Screen is about to fail on him, and—worst of all—an Equipment Bill has just bared its teeth.

Despite all this the exhibitor knows that the widesereen showings have worked marvels for the theatre. The pictures are truly bigger and better. Sound is clearer and more realistic. Showmanship has again proudly reared its head. And, all in all, a languid desparing industry has a gleam in its eye and a jingle in its purse.

Some of the stories shown on the wide-screen represent a great improvement over those of a few years ago, not only in content but also in treatment. (Other stories lack ealories—and there is a rather alarming trend toward not-so-hot narratives.)

The producer and director have very clearly adapted their picture material to the characteristics of the widesereen. Pageant pictures, cavalcades, geographical superlandseapes, and the like have provided eye-filling splendor.

And the wide-screen has created the successor to the Western, namely the Eastern. The horse opera has been succeeded by the harem symphony. Egypt, Palestine, and the near East in general have provided a combination of vast halls, feminine pulchritude, and clashing scimitars which put to shame the desert shaek, the beloved horse, and the he-man hero of the Westerns. All of this is to the good. And we may confidently expect that the Eastern will be just as popular and last at least as long as the Western if it is properly exploited.

All Depends Where You Sit

But there are still some problems evident in wide-sereen showing. After all, the wide-screen was shoved into theatres which had never been intended for this type of picture. As a result, views in the front rows and to the sides of the orchestra leave much to be desired. Perspective is distorted and rather weird effects occasionally occur. Closeups present a bit of a problem since a 15-foot oneshot with lots of space on each side looks odd to the average viewer.

In fact, the entire problem of producing intimate effects in non-spectacular films remains unsolved in the widesereen field.

The very sweep of the wide-screen, so effective for certain purposes, ean readily clash with intimacy, coziness, or the highly personal crisis on the screen.

Lack of standardization of various wide-screen processes has caused much confusion and has cost many dollars. Real standardization does not yet seem in sight. All of this has raised the already high costs of equipment and operation, on which are piled the by no means modest rentals required on the costly wide-screen productions.

And the drive-in theatre has presented both an opportunity and a problem. The screen can be widened in an outdoor theatre but viewing angles and adequate screen illumination worry the drive-in operator.

None of these problems seems beyond solution. And certainly pictures with aspect ratios of from 1.75 to 2.5 are probably here to stay for a long time.

There remain many opportunities for even further improvement. Will screens be widened even further? This is doubtful in most present-day theatres and probably not desirable in the average new theatres in the future. Will 3-D without glasses finally be developed and given a fair opportunity to find its place in the theatre world? And will 3-D, preferably without glasses, be combined with the wide-screen to open new vistas of realism and audienee appeal? If so, new or modified types of theatres may become necessary.

And is it possible that wide-screen pictures themselves will be produced with variable aspect ratios so that each scene will have picture proportions suited to its contents, action, and emotional effect?

All of this has laid stress on technical improvements. And no one can possibly deny that engineering has at long last been recognized as a valuable asset to the showman. Properly used, technology helps enormously to bring audiences to the box office. But let it never be forgotten that the poignant story or the laughable episode is an indispensable part of a theatre success. America has vast untapped resources among young writers, actors, directors, and the like. If these sources of audience appeal are left untapped, the industry will be the loser. The best team for the theatres of the future is made up of a talent scout and a technologist.

Battle Fatigue In A Doughnut Factory

By PETER LIND HAYES

My first six months in the Air Force could have been the reason it took the United States five years to win World War II.

I was stationed at Santa Ana air base in southern California and after three days of basic training was transferred to a radio production unit in the city itself. For the next months my duties consisted mainly of shouting brave words into a defenseless microphone. These words were written by some of the faneiest Captains and Majors the Screen Writer's Guild had ever turned out. We actually had a sound man that finally craeked under the strain; after 7,000 missions over Europe, the noise from his turntables finally unnerved him and he went into shock. One of the majors solemnly decorated him with a red and blue ribbon—a two-tone Remington typewriter ribbon.

Peter Lind Hayes

The war of the radio production unit was beginning to take its toll on me too. I was a corporal at the time and my base pay was somewhere in the neighborhood of $53 per month. This was not a nice neighborhood so my wife, Mary Healy, had already gone back to work. Her work took her to New York and left me in Santa Ana, alone and miserable. To console my lonely heart I began to stuff my lonely stomach. I became a "nervous eater."

Each morning Roll Call became a "Sweet Roll Call" to me. Immediately after I was "present and accounted for," I skipped around the corner to the pastry shop and pursued my study of the intricate art of doughnut dunking. I was a past master! By now I knew how long to hold a chocolate covered doughnut under coffee before the point of disintegration was reached. I had also become a slob!

One night after I had finished a banana split at my favorite Owl drugstore, I decided to invest a penny toward finding out just how much of a slob I had become. I held my breath, stepped gingerly onto the scale and dropped a coin into the slot. After a shriek that sounded like a frightened peacoek, the scale released a card which told me that I should be ashamed of myself and that I weighed 183 pounds! My first inclination was to laugh my weight off, but then I turned the card over. I was expecting to see a smiling picture of Cesar Romero or Tyrone Power . . . but no, the pieture was that of "Mary Healy! 20th Century-Fox Starlet!" I sobbed a little as I blurted out, "Everyone loves a fat man, unless they're married to him!"

The sudden realization that I had become a fat man prodded me into a diet that lasted 26½ hours!

At the end of this ordeal I crawled deliriously back to the pastry shop and devoured everything in sight. I was actually on my seventh doughnut when lightning struck. A tall lean sergeant had traeked me to my hideaway and was telling me that the Colonel wanted to see me. I had glorious delusions as I staggered toward the Administration Building. "The Colonel," I mused, "has chosen me to be the first to know that the war will be over in 20 minutes and will I be able to get *him* a job when we all return to civilian life?" I was wrong! The Colonel wanted me to be the first to know that he was siek of me and that he was "lending me out" to the First Motion Picture Unit in Culver City for a training film called, "Crash Landings in Unfavorable Terrain." I saluted smartly and asked if the "part" was any good just before I was thrown out of his office.

Fort Roach Commando

My orders were in perfect shape so I had no trouble passing the Santa Ana border. I had one day delay en route and was told to report at Fort Roach (like in Hal Roach) on a Thursday at 7:15 in the morning. This was a little early for an actor of my stature, so naturally I was trembling with indignation as I approaehed the ominous gates of Fort Roach. As I passed through the gates, I spotted a coffee stand and rushed madly toward the solace I knew I would find there. The attendant was kindly and smiled knowingly as I asked for "Hot coffee, two of those chocolate covered ones and one of those with the cocoanut on it!" I had submerged one of the doughnuts and was drooling in eager antieipation of that moment when it would be *ready*. Suddenly from nowhere, a hand shot out and eneircled my wrist in a vise-like grip. My eyes traveiled slowly up the arm until I saw a corporal's stripes. I was a sergeant by now so I felt confident. I looked further and found that my antagonist was George Montgomery, the cowboy aetor!

"Hi ya George old boy!" I said. He tightened his grip on my wrist and sneered. "Have you looked at yourself lately?" "No I haven't George, and let go of my doughnut!" His piercing cowboy eyes glared into mine. "Get with it man . . . jump out of bed in the morning and take a cold shower . . . get to work with those bar-bells!"

"George," I hollered, "let go of my doughnut! You're ruining my doughnut!" At this point I bit him on the arm. His agonized scream brought us to the attention of a passing Lieutenant. The Lieutenant quickly came to attention and asked, "What is the meaning of this men?" "Nothing sir," I said, "this corporal won't let me have my doughnut!" The Lieutenant studied the situation for a moment and then in a God-given voice said, "Corporal, let the Sergeant have his doughnut!" Montgomery released my wrist, but it was too late, the doughnut was done for.

This tragic incident happened 12 years ago and to this day I haven't been able to sit through a George Montgomery movie.

NO 'SHORTAGE' OF QUALITY

Realistic Future of Tollvision Depends On Top Pix Availability

By FRED HIFT

There is a widely-held impression that if subscription-tv ever becomes a commercial reality—and it's very much on the horizon now—its success or failure will depend by and large on the degree of cooperation the medium can elicit from Hollywood.

Developments so far lend considerable substance to this argument. At the same time, this dependence on a rival industry, sections of which are fervently opposed to pay-as-you-see and consider it ruinous competition, constitutes a serious roadblock in the future course of toll-tv and, for that matter, in its battle to obtain the green light from the Federal Communications Commission.

There are, of course, a good many events and attractions, other than motion pictures, that would be available to the fee-tv broadcasters once they get going. The legit theatre may supply some, education may be a source of others, and there is reason to believe that the sports world is about ready to give toll-tv a try. The prime program element which the public is now able to get on tv, however, is quality, firstrun films. And unless it is able to get those, subscription video will lack the appeal that will induce the necessary millions to install a new gadget at their tv sets.

The key to this entire question then, and very likely also a determining factor in any upcoming FCC hearings, is the Hollywood producer. Sooner or later he will have

(Continued on page 65)

ALLIED ROLLING SEVEN FILMS FIRST QUARTER

Hollywood.

Allied Artists will start the new year with a program of seven features during the first three months. Schedule calls for four starters in January, two in February and one in March.

January starters include "Wichita," in CinemaScope, "Neon Rainbow," "Royal Rogues" and "Woman's Reformatory." "Hold Back the Night" and "Lord of the Jungle" roll in February and "Phenix City" in March.

Struggle in Vain For Booth Labor Accord

Minneapolis.

Deadlock between projectionists union and some 50 Minneapolis independent theatre operators continues in effect despite the best efforts of state labor conciliators, who have been attempting to bring both sides together for two weeks.

William Donnelly, IATSE vice president, got home office orders to represent the operators, although he and that local have frequently been at sword's points. Donnelly began conferences with Ted Mann, representing indie exhibitors.

At a meeting with Carroll Melloy, state conciliator, the local demanded a 20% increase over a three-year period, a third week of vacation, one-sixth of a week severance pay for every month worked, and discussion of health and welfare provisions.

The union then withdrew all except wage demands. On offering of management to continue the previous contract terms, however, the union reverted to its original demands.

Mann, meanwhile, on behalf of Independents, countered with a demand for a 25% cut, and offered to show figures confirming theatre losses. Chain operators are not going along with this angle.

Union has filed a strike notice with the state, but move of Donnelly into the act is believed to have forestalled any immediate strike move.

4 DIRECTORS ON FILM

And Two Producers—Rush Cinerama's '7 Wonders'

Hollywood.

Filming of the third Cinerama picture, "Seven Wonders of the World," will be handled by four directors and two producers. Directors are Tay Garnett, Andrew Marton, Paul Mantz and Ted Tetzlaff. Producers are Lowell Thomas and Merian C. Cooper. In addition, John Farrow has been signed as Cooper's personal consultant.

Marton is currently on location in Aden, Mantz is in Africa and Tetzlaff will direct the American portion of the film. Garnett is on his way to the Orient, Thomas is in Arabia and Farrow leaves late this week for Africa.

SQUAWK ON OFF-FOCUS PROJECTION IN CINEMAS

New York.

Editor, VARIETY:

I have found that many movie theatres, and especially those along 42d Street, are very careless about checking the accurate focusing of their presentations onto the screen. I have twice now gotten out of my seat to seek the theatre managers and ask them to rectify the focusing. I have sat through several pictures that were shown off-focus.

The 42d Street theatres are the worst offenders. Perhaps you have contact with some movie association which would like to know of this general misfocusing.

If nothing is done soon we'll all get bad eyes and stay home with wet bandages over our faces listening to the radio.

In brief: "The movies are hazier than ever!"

Frank Swiss.

Big Market in Far East For Topgrade Vaude Acts

Glasgow.

There is a considerable market in the east for top cabaret acts, according to Babette & Raoul, Scot adagio dance duo, now dancing at Spence's Hotel, Calcutta.

Pair report a growing market in locations like Bombay, Delhi, Colombo (Ceylon), Rangoon (Burma), Bangkok (Siam), Singapore (Malaya) and Saigon (Indo-China).

Virgil, U. S. illusionist, is currently presenting his "Magicana" show at the Palace Cinema, Karachi, Pakistan, for a short season. Top seats cost 9 rupees 4½ annas, which is approximately $3.

Karachi, mixture of elegance and poverty, situated on edge of the Sind Desert, has a proportion of clubs and hotels catering largely to Americans and Europeans. The two exclusive clubs are the Gymkhana and the Boat Club, each equipped with bars, gardens, verandahs and dance floors. The Gymkhana screens a feature pic weekly.

Three main hotels, staging dinner and floor shows, are the Palace (with its annex, Le Gourmet), the Beach Luxury and the Metropole. Metropole is currently featuring a small group of Spanish singers and dancers, as also is the Beach Luxury.

Large number of cinemas in Karachi are in the main air-conditioned. Cost of a circle seat is just over three rupees, about 95c. Prices of goods, however, are high, a bottle of beer costing $1 in the clubs and $1.80 in hotels.

At Calcutta, the London cabaret entertainers, Jack & Daphne Barker, are a current click.

Resident bands in leading hotels and clubs include many European and American musicians, who find a profitable and comfortable living in show biz out east. Avril Angers, English comedienne, is on the Karachi-Calcutta nitery circuit this month.

PUBLIC WANTS ONLY TOP PIX

By A. W. SCHWALBERG
(President, Paramount Film Distributing Corp.)

Know what a "time machine" is? Well, it's something the motion picture industry could find very useful at this stage of the game.

Al Schwalberg

Actually, of course, there is no such contraption as a "time machine," but readers of a popular comic strip of recent years will recall a complicated-looking structure made of pipes and wires and electric switches into which a character would step, choose a date out of history he would like to re-live and, presto! in no time he would find himself back in 1492 sailing with Columbus, or in the 1860's fighting in the Civil War, or in any other past period he selected on the machine's dial panel.

Now, if I had a chance to step into a time machine like that, I'd be satisfied to make only a very short retrospective journey—say back to around 1946. And nothing would please me more than to have as my guests on that little trip some of my exhibitor friends, preferably those who in recent months have been alluding to a "product shortage."

I should imagine that these friends of mine would be most pleased to join me in this trip to 1946, for the sinister term "product shortage" had no place in the industry scheme of things then. Not that intra-industry affairs ever offered a bed of roses, and certainly 1946 was no exception, but it's nice to look back to the time when a particular gripe just didn't exist.

Let's make believe we have taken the time machine journey back to 1946. What was the product situation then? It could be said that it was simply wonderful from an exhibitor standpoint, assuming all an exhibitor might be interested in is keeping his projectors' sprocket-wheels pulling film along night and day regardless of the entertainment values recorded on the prints being so

(Continued on page 56)

Vet Indie Yens For the 'Bad' Old Days of Block Booking

By SAMUEL RINZLER
(Prez, Randforce Circuit)

Brooklyn, N. Y.

Have never been in favor of, and as a matter of fact, strongly oppose, any movement on the part of exhibitors to ask for Government intervention in the solution of their problems. It is not exaggeration to say that many exhibitors are just beginning to realize how lucky they were when we had block booking. This is especially true, when they recall that each company was producing between 40 and 60 pictures, with a contract permitting cancellation of 20% of the product sold. When the final decree was issued by the Supreme Court, ordering complete divorcement between production and exhibition, many exhibitors rejoiced, but I went on record and said that one more "victory" like this would put exhibitors out of business. It does not give me any great pleasure to see that, unfortunately, my prediction has proved to be entirely too accurate.

Sam Rinzler

Everyone these days is talking about product and debating whether the industry would be better off or worse off if there were more pictures or fewer pictures. Somehow, I can't believe that mak-

(Continued on page 43)

MANAGEMENT'S YEAR

Chamie Chairs Hollywood Pension Plan For 1955

Hollywood.

New chairman of the Motion Picture Industry's pension plan for 1955 is Alfred P. Chamie, of the Assn. of Motion Picture Producers. He was elected to succeed George Flaherty of IATSE. Fred F. Meyer of 20th-Fox was elected vice-chairman; Herbert Aller of Cameramen's Local 659, secretary, and Henry Wadsworth of Laborers Local 724, vice-secretary.

Under the industry's pension plan, management and labor alternate in the high offices. Board consists of eight representatives, eight alternates from each side. Administrator of the plan is Mark Bushner.

SHOW BIZ CO-OP CUTS OHIO AUTO FATALITIES

Columbus.

A large measure of credit for Ohio's 1954 highway fatality total dropping 14 per cent under the 1953 figure must go to the state's theatres, radio-tv station and newspapers, says U. C. Felty, state director of highway safety.

Felty revealed details of a new safe-driving cartoon film to be shown in some 800 Ohio theatres with the cooperation of the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio and the National Screen Service, distributing firm. The film was produced by Dick Robbins, former commercial film producer here, now associated with the Highway Safety Dept.

Ohio will probably end the year with 280 less lives lost in highway accidents than in 1953.

"The major reason for this decrease in deaths," said Felty, "is due to the fine publicity and program of education carried out by the press, radio, television, film theatres and similar groups. The State Highway Patrol has made a few more traffic arrests this year and other measures have been employed to improve safety. But nevertheless the main credit must go to the groups which have brought the problem directly to the public."

$3 CENSOR CHARGE OFF, OHIO PRINTS EASED

Columbus.

As Ohio entered its fourth week of freedom from film censorship, there was one effect and one development in evidence.

The effect of censorship's end: An easing of the print situation. Since companies no longer have to pay $3 per reel for every print, they will be more willing to bring prints into the state for simultaneous bookings.

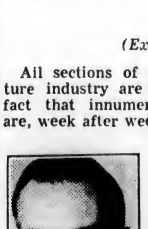
The development: State Sen. Andrew Putka, Democrat of Cleveland, says he is preparing a new film censorship law for submission to the Legislature early next year. Putka says his bill will absolutely define the terms "immoral" and "obscene" and will be court-proof. Inasmuch, as the Legislature is Republican controlled, chances that Putka's bill will see any action are remote. The GOP is cooking up its own bill.

IS HE WORTH SAVING?

The Problem of the Small Exhibitor

By ALFRED E. DAFF
(Executive V. P., Universal Pictures)

All sections of the motion picture industry are faced with the fact that innumerable exhibitors are, week after week, closing down simply because most of them are not in a position to install new systems, and some of those with enough money to do so are asking themselves whether they dare. It is certainly a great problem for both the present and the future.



Al Daff

A general feeling amongst this type of exhibitor is that it is better to close down altogether than to hope that business can be made payable if they install a new system. They cannot afford to continue losing money and, even if they could hold their own with the old conventional projection, there is a knowledge that this avenue of possibility may soon be closed to them. Theatres which in the past have been able to return a small margin of profit with low grosses now find that, under present conditions, they cannot gross anything like those comparatively small grosses. Losses up to 50% in gross are not unusual; and, because most of the overhead, such as rent, light, power and advertising is mostly permanently fixed, it is impossible to still further retrench to combat the loss in revenue. The result is that many of

(Continued on page 58)

I have just reread this story. When was it written—this year—last year—the year before—1951? No. It was published on Aug. 13, 1931, in the Australian Film Weekly.

How do I know about it? I wrote it.

In the above, I only substituted "systems" for "talkies." I thought the parallel between today and the past several years and conditions that prevailed 23 years and five months ago might be interesting in the light of what has happened to our industry since 1931.

Al Young Premise: Non-Tint Still Stanle

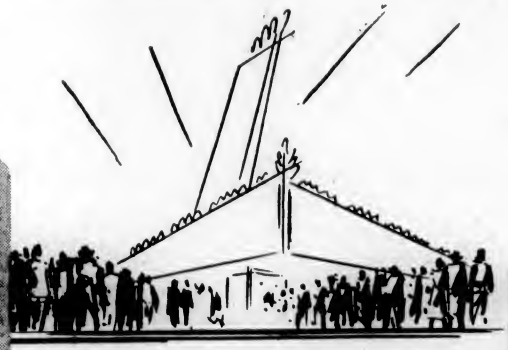
Declaring that "black-and-white film is still the mainstay of the industry," Al Young, DuArt Film Laboratories prez, last week disclosed plans for a new DuArt black-and-white plant replacing the outfit's old one.

DuArt is spending about $250,000 on the new lab which will incorporate new highspeed processing machines. The first of these is due for delivery in February. Construction of the new plant is already under way via a rebuilding of the current lab.

18 Editing at Universal

Year's windup finds Universal with 18 pix in various stages of editing, the highest number in the studio's cutting rooms at any time during 1954. Total reps more than half the pix due for U release next year.

Of the 18 editing, four are in Technicolor and CinemaScope. Eight others are tinters, five are black-and-white, and one is in 3-D. Latter is "Revenge of the Creature," due for release in March.



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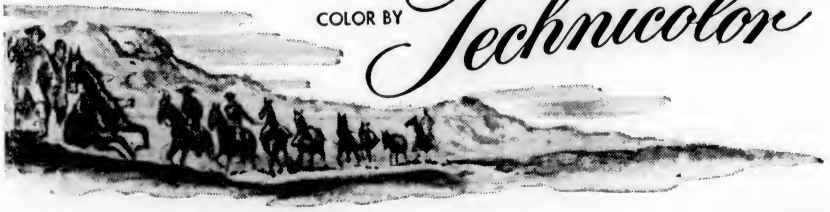

Universal's PRE-SOLD Product

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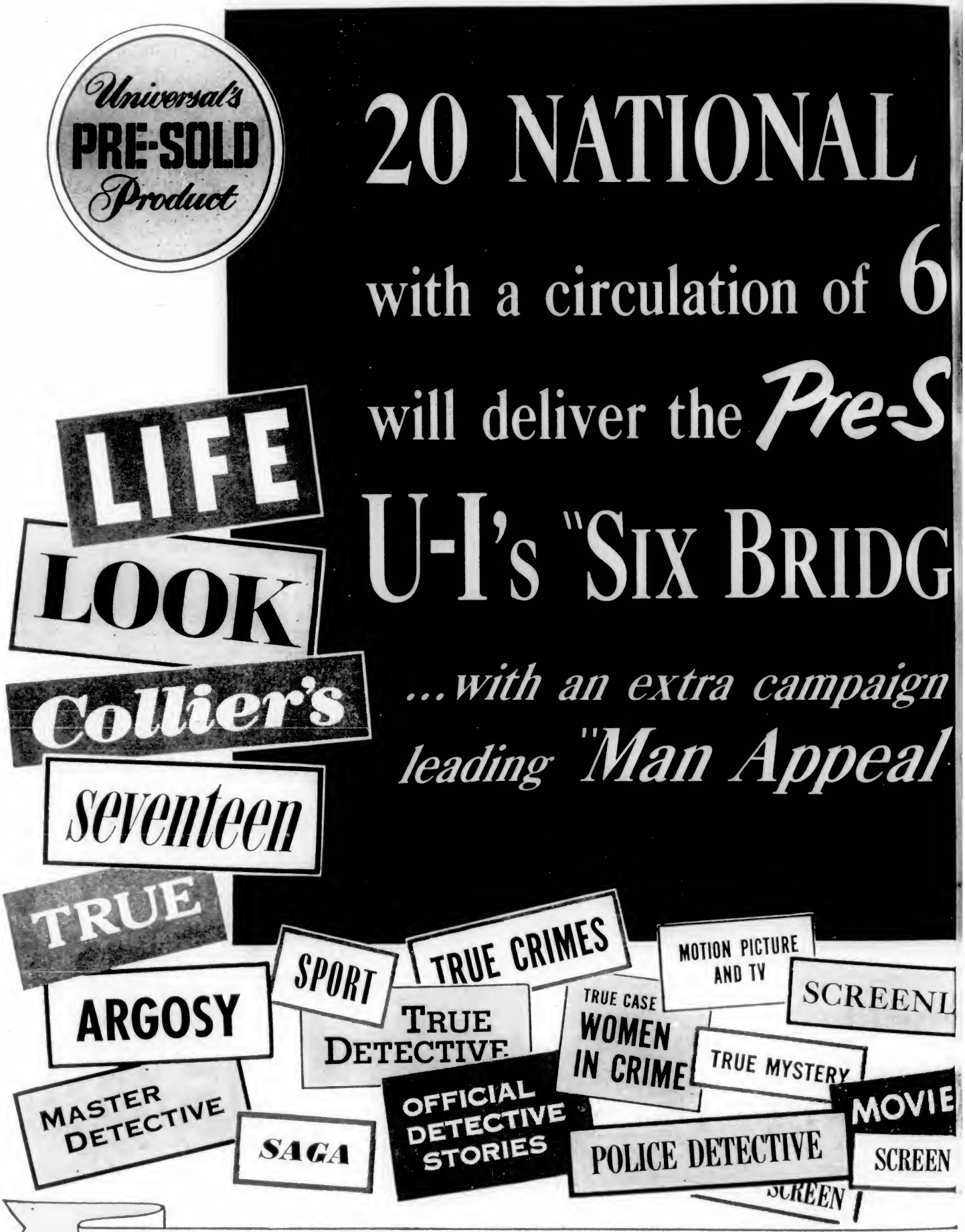
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MAGAZINES 6,000,000 *elling Punch* for ES TO CROSS"

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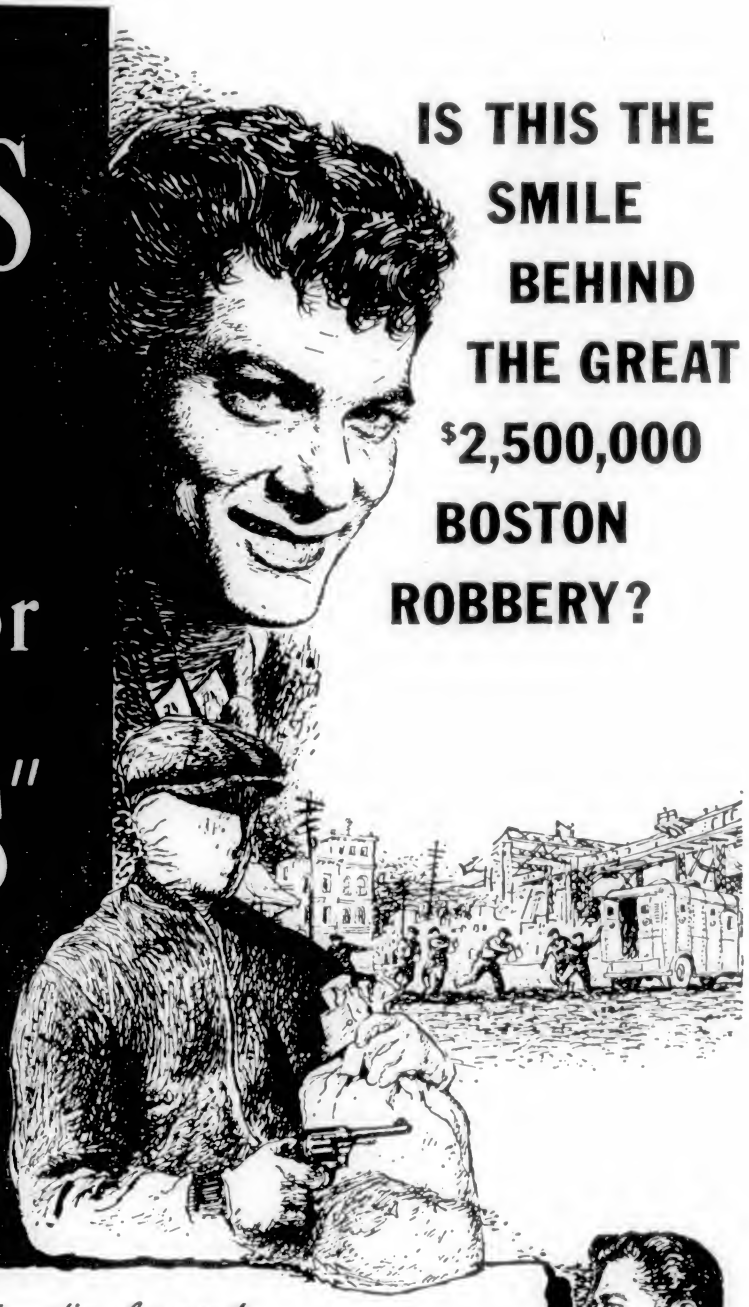

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Universal-International presents

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DIRECTED BY JOSEPH PEVNEY • SCREENPLAY BY SIDNEY BOEHM • PRODUCED BY AARON ROSENBERG

ENGLAND AREA JANUARY 19

So many — So different — yet So alike in that

BIG BOX OFFICE APPEAL

ABOVE US THE WAVES
JOHN MILLS · DONALD SINDEN
JOHN GREGSON · MICHAEL MEDWIN
JAMES ROBERTSON JUSTICE
Directed by Ralph Thomas
Produced by William Ma Q

JACK BUCHANAN · JANETTE SCOTT
JEAN CARSON · BRENDA DE BANZIE
IN
AS LONG AS THEY'RE HAPPY
Eastman Colour
JULIAN STEPHEN and JERRY WA N
Guest Star DIANA DORS
Alan Melville · Directed by J
Produced by Raymond Stross

GLYNIS JOHNS · ROBERT NEWTON
DONALD SINDEN
IN
THE BEACHCOMBER
by
W Somerset Maugham
Colour by TECHNICOLOR
Screenplay by Muriel and Sydney B
Directed by Muriel B x
Produced by William MacQuitty

CORNELL BORCHERS · YVONNE MITCHELL
ARMIN DAHLEN · ALEXANDER KNOX
IN
THE DIVIDED HEART
M CHEL RAY · GEOFFREY KEEN
Made by Ea Stud

DIRK BOGARDE · MURIEL PAVLOW
KENNETH MORE IN DONALD SINDEN
DOCTOR in the HOUSE
Colour by TECHNICOLOR
Also Starring
KAY KENDALL · JAMES ROBERTSON JUSTICE
DONALD HOUSTON
Adapted from his own novel by Richard Gordon · Screenplay by Nicholas Phipps · Directed by Ralph Thomas
Produced by Betty E. Box

PAUL DOUGLAS
IN
HIGH and DRY
WITH
HUBERT GREGG · ALEX MACKENZIE
ABE BAKER · JAMES COPELAND
TOMMY KEARINS
Directed by Alexander Mackendrick
Produced by Michael Truman Screenplay by William Rose
A Michael Balcon Production Made by Ealing Studios

JACK HAWKINS · GLYNIS JOHNS
IN
LAND OF FURY
In Eastman Colour
with NOEL PURCELL
and introducing
LAYA RAKI · INIA TE WIATA
Screenplay by William Fairchild
Directed by Ken Annakin
Produced by George H. Brown

ROBERT DONAT · KAY WALSH
IN
LEASE of LIFE
In Eastman Colour
also starring
DENHOLM ELLIOTT · ADRIENNE CORRI
Directed by Charles Frend
Associate Producer Jack Rix Screenplay by Eric Ambler
A Michael Balcon Production Made by Ealing Studios

DAVID NIVEN · PEGGY CUMMINS
ANNE VERNON · HERBERT LOM
IN
The LOVE LOTTERY
Colour by TECHNICOLOR
Directed by Charles Cr Screenplay by M r
Pr d M Dis howsky
A Michael Balcon Pr Made by Ea

The Little Kidnappers
DUNCAN MACRAE · ADRIENNE CORRI
JON WHITELEY · VINCENT WINTER
Screenplay by N I Pater n
Directed by Philip Leacock
A Nolbandov-Parkyn Produc n

GLYNIS JOHNS · DONALD SINDEN
ANNE CRAWFORD · MARGARET RUTHERFORD
IN
MAD ABOUT MEN
Colour by TECHNICOLOR
Screenplay by Peter Bl Kmin
Directed by Ralph T mas
Pr d ed by Be E Bo

GREGORY PECK
IN
Man with a Million
IN
RONA SQUIRE A E MATTHEW
WILFRID HYDE WHITE with JANE GRIFFITHS

THE NIGHT MY NUMBER CAME UP
MICHAEL REDGRAVE · ALEXANDER KNOX
SHEILA SIM · DENHOLM ELLIOTT
NIGEL STOCK
Directed by Leslie Norman Produced by Tom Morahan
A Michael Balcon Production Made by Ealing Studios

ANTHONY STEEL · ROBERT BEATTY
DAVID KNIGHT · MARGO LORENZ
IN
Out of the Clouds
In Eastman Colour · Also Starring
JAMES ROBERTSON JUSTICE · EUNICE GAYSON
GORDON HARKER
Produced and Directed by Michael Relph and Basil Dearden
Associate Producer Eric Williams
Screenplay by John Eldridge and Michael Relph

NORMAN WISDOM
IN
ONE GOOD TURN
Also Starring
JOAN RICE · SHIRLEY ABICAIR
THORA HIRD
Screenplay by Maurice Cowan, John Paddy Carstairs and Ted Willis Directed by John Paddy Carstairs
Produced by Maurice Cowan

Passage Home
ANTHONY STEEL · PETER FINCH
DIANE CILENTO · CYRIL CUSACK
Directed by Roy Baker
Produced by Julian Wintle

GREGORY PECK
IN
The Purple Plain
Colour by TECHNICOLOR
introducing WIN MIN THAN
Screenplay by Er Ambl Directed by R
Pr d by

KAY WALSH · BILL OWEN
EDWARD UNDERDOWN
and ROBERT MORLEY in
THE RAINBOW JACKET
Colour by TECHNICOLOR
P d and directed by Michael Re p
and Basil Dearden
& Screenplay by T E B Clarke

LAURENCE HARVEY · SUSAN SHENTALL
IN
Romeo and Juliet
by William Sh
by TECHNICOLOR P
EBASTIAN CABOT
Adapted f th
Dir ted by R

MICHAEL REDGRAVE · DIRK BOGARDE
ANTHONY STEEL · NIGEL PATRICK
BONAR COLLEANO
IN
THE SEA SHALL NOT HAVE THEM
Directed by

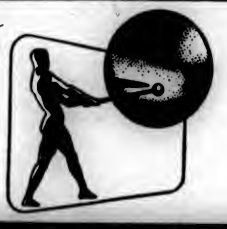
THE SHIP THAT DIED OF SHAME
RICHARD ATTENBOROUGH · BILL OWEN
GEORGE BAKER · ROLAND CULVER
VIRGINIA McKENNA · BERNARD LEE
Directed by Basil Dearden Produced by Michael Relph
A Michael Balcon Production Made by Ealing Studios

Simba
In Eastman Colour
DIRK BOGARDE · DONALD SINDEN
VIRGINIA McKENNA
Directed by Brian Desmond Hurst
Produced by Peter de Sarigny

ALEC GUINNESS · ODILE VERSOIS
IN
To Paris with Love
Colour by TECHNICOLOR
Screenplay by Robert Buckner
Directed by Robert Hamer
Produced by Antony Darnborough

NORMAN WISDOM · MARGARET RUTHERFORD
IN
Trouble in Store
Also Starring
MOIRA LISTER · DEREK BOND
LANA MORRIS · JERRY DESMONDE
Screenplay by John Paddy Carstairs, Maurice Cowan and Ted Willis Directed by John Paddy Carstairs
Produced by Maurice Cowan

ANTHONY STEEL · SHEILA SIM
IN
WEST OF ZANZIBAR
Colour by TECHNICOLOR
EDRIC CONNOR · ORLANDO MARTINS
WILLIAM SIMONS · MARTIN BENSON
Story and Direct n by Harry Watt Produced by Les
Norman Screenplay by Ma Cal and Jack Whittingham
A Michael Balcon Pr n ss with The
Schlesinger Organisat Made by Ealing Studios



ODILE VERSOIS · DAVID KNIGHT
IN
Chance Meeting
JOSEPH TOMELTY · DAVID KOSSOFF
Screenplay by George Tr and R E
Directed by A y A
Produced by A y Have A

THE J ARTHUR RANK ORGANISATION OF GREAT BRITAIN

A Handy Hollywood Baedeker

For Those in the Acting, Directing, Writing, Producing and Allied Professions, Including a Guide to Famous Outlaws of the West

By KEN ENGLUND

Hollywood.

Gather closer, children. That's it. Now. All comfy? Fine. Let's begin . . .

There is an old San Fernando Valley legend that was first told to me at the Brown Derby by two hunters from the East, Paddy Chayefsky and Michael Kidd, who had gotten lost on the way to Metro and suddenly found themselves in a beautiful, beautiful fairyland— bordered on one side by Hillcrest and on the other, the dry bed of the Los Angeles River hard by the Banks of America.

Ken Englund

And lo! Before them stretched the Sunset Strip and a myriad of agents dancing like fireflies in the moonlight —and swarms of fireflies dancing like agents—and the glittering stars and starlets dancing in the limelight.

And Paddy and Michael couldn't believe what they saw that night—and during the next 24 hours—for, through tired, scratched eyeballs, the whole of the enchanted Valley of Smogdoon suddenly loomed up bright and clear! Gone were the grey opaque mists from petroleum refineries, Deisel trucks, and 2,000,000 incinerators. Once again, for a brief idyllic moment, it was the sunny California of old.

But it would not last, as Paddy and Michael were to learn to their tearful sorrow—learning also the secret of the curse that had befallen the enchanted City of the Angels. A dread curse, stipulating that only once in 12 months were the citizens to be allowed one good look at their town—one day of the year when it would appear again out of the black bog for newcomers from the East to marvel at—through the intercession of the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce.

So Paddy and Michael, footsore and weary, plumped themselves down at the door of the Mocambo, where a kindly Parking Captain fetched them some Collyrium from Schwab's for their smog-reddened eyes, and soon they lay down their rifles and money belts and slept as soundly as the Three Bears—who, incidentally, were singing next door at the Crescendo.

This was their first mistake. Visitors should never lay down their rifles while in the County Strip—and certainly not their money belts.

Their second mistake was made the next week—when after being safely ensconced on studio payrolls—lulled by sybaritical dreams of untold wealth and luxury to come—and full to the brim with false security—they failed to go on an educational excursion I strongly recommend to any new member of our colony—namely, to take the Guided Tour to the Homes of the Hollywood Merchants to see how they live. Homes? Mansions is a better word!

Built by the sweat of thousands of brows—high and low brows in our profession—yours and mine—these pink marble palaces of our local Kublai Khans are Object Lesson Number One in this thesis. For they will all be here way after you're gone and I'm gone—either back home—or to tv—or to that Happy Valley where never is heard a discouraging word and your big Angel Agent in the sky phones every hour to tell you you're wanted simultaneously by all the Majors.

Yes, indeed, Newcomers, if you saw how, in what secure splendor, the local shopkeepers, kennelkeepers, garage owners, cement mixers, jewelers, doctors, decorators, dentists, business managers, tree trimmers, landscape architects, rug layers, mule skinners, antique furniture wormhole experts, warming pan, coonskin cap, candlestick, electric gate and bookmakers lived—you'd think twice about buying anything here. As a matter of fact, you'd think 20 times.

And here's another piece of advice. No matter how long you stay, a day or a decade, keep your purse pinned inside your vest or waistband of your bloomers—as the case may be. When that gets all filled up, bury your savings in the back yard in a good stout cookie crock. Furthermore, while you're out West, don't talk to any strange men, particularly if they happen to be department store charge account executives, handsome smiling architects, or smooth talking decorators with their city ways. If they speak to you first, just say that you're a level-headed, clean-living American and tell 'em to go peddle their Eye-tallan wallpapers and French antiques somewhere else!

For this is indeed a Land of Plenty—but not for you or me.

Which gets me, rather laboriously, but right to the main point of this monograph. (I'd like to make it now in case I lose you along the way.) And the Moral—to wit:

SAVE YOUR MONEY!
MONEY IS GOOD FOR YOU!
"PUT MONEY IN THY PURSE!"
CHECK YOUR BILLS!
DON'T COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS, COUNT YOUR CHANGE!
CAN HAPPINESS BUY YOU MONEY?
DON'T BUY ANYTHING!
EXCEPT FOR DOGS AND MOTHERS, MONEY IS MAN'S BEST FRIEND!
THINK!

Paste these Words To Live By on your makeup mirror, forehead or windshield of your Jaguar, and ponder on the following tragic case histories, proliting from the soul-searing experiences of myself and other unfortunates who got lost in the Brentwood Circle and found ourselves on the Road to Ruin.

The names, of course, have been changed to protect the crooked, but we must reckon with the libel laws and remember with caution that behind every clump of hibiscus is a covey of hungry legal eagles waiting to swoop and pounce.

And so I fling open my closely guarded Hollywood journals, diaries and records—faithfully begun in 1937—including items from other people's memories as well—that burn but do not bless.

Tighten your money belts! Here we go—with nuggets of good sound advice, homilies and old saws—interspersed with heartrending stories. Wear your sensible shoes. We've got a long way to go.

Chapter I
And How Does Your Garden Grow?
or
In Cultivating a Green Thumb Make Sure You Don't Get the Finger

The first thing to do when getting off the train or plane is not to start a garden until you've unpacked. In other words, adjust to the nature of your new environment before trying to conquer nature. Let's say your last Walden Pond was a chipped birdbath in your family backyard in Jersey, or perhaps a cactus plant won at Coney Island, carefully nurtured in a windowbox at the Great Northern. This is not a thorough enough horticultural background for you to be putting in acres of breadfruit trees your second week in town just because you finally have a good paying job.

"Shades of Luther Burbank!" you cry as you walk, then run through the nurseries, two Japanese gardeners padding discreetly behind, selecting with lavish hand your own passion fruit, papaya, banana and bamboo trees — figuring, like some Mandarin of old in Peking, that in "the long run you'll save money." You won't have to purchase your passion fruit at Ralph's Market and "pay the middle man"—you'll grow "your own"—one step closer to total "Independence!" Why buy papaya jelly "in a store" when your wife can put it up—which will also give her "something to do." Besides, Junior "loves bananas"—and just think, your "own bamboo"—you can make your own rickshaw—cutting out "the middle man!"

Just be careful you don't plant delicately rooted trees, however, in shaley soil.* Planted in hardpan by a venerable English gardener I swore by—and later at—my first crop of oranges were six years in coming. Totaling up the water bills, sprinkling systems, fertilizers, gardeners and gopher traps, when they finally reached the breakfast table, the oranges cost me a trifle over $300 a dozen. But I didn't have to feel "dependent" on Ralph's Market (just on MGM)—and it gives a man a feeling of "deep satisfaction." That man wasn't me, of course. It was my gardener—because the oranges were so sour, I gave 'em to him for his chickens. He later took pity and made me a wholesale price on a couple of roasting hens—but even they tasted sour.

Now this is where I lighten up the text, so it isn't just all dry stuff, with a story that is at least wistfully apropos:

An ex-Lindylte, right off the Chief, made a beeline for Hollywood & Vine to compare notes with old cronies now transplanted to sunny soil—to be more specific—a sunnier square of sidewalk. Much to our man's amazement, he found his buddies unenthusiastic in their attitudes towards the new outdoor life. The spokesman for the group put it this way: "Look, Joe—it's hard to explain, but to give you a f'rinstance—remember in New York when a guy's act got a lousy notice we used to—for a rib—have a sack of fertilizer dellvered to his door at six in the morning?"

"So?" said Joe.

"So—in Hollywood you pull the same gag and by eight o'clock, he's already got the fertilizer on his petunias!"

While waiting for the general laughter to die down, we'll go on to the next chapter in our Nature Section.

Chapter II
Look Before You Plant

Don Hartman, many years ago, was riding on the crest of the wave with the successful authorship of a Burns & Allen smash, "Here Comes Cookie," and sunk the proceeds into a lemon tree. This tree became his pride, but not his joy, simply because it wouldn't grow. Don was sick about it—sat up all night in the frost season with it—no smudge pot was too good for it. He flew tree specialists and surgeons in to examine the sagging citrus, but all failed to diagnose the cause of its stunted growth.

This lemon among lemons was still an ailing dwarf when, several years later, Don, on a morning of revelation, found that the roots never had a chance to grow because it had been planted in the ground without being taken out of the can!

CHAPTER III
Grass—Avoid If Possible

Don, myself and other unfortunates, have regularly put in an expensive new lawn every year before we learned that only quack grass is native to this semi-tropical land. But what quack landscape architect will tell you the truth—that ivy is cheaper and better? Particularly if you live in one of the canyons, because ivy provides better shelter for the rattlesnakes and keeps them from getting underfoot when you're playing badminton.

If you're stubborn, however, and wish to throw caution and money to the winds, and want a deep green Eastern type lawn, you'd better fill up your compartment on the Chief with as much top soil as you can and bring it with you—because we don't have any here. And what little we do have left, we don't want squatters grabbing.

J. C. Nugent, a long time fervent leader in the fight against grass and the cost and maintenance thereof, once solved the problem neatly when he had an acre of ground around the house staring him in the face. He paved it with cement and painted it green.

CHAPTER IV
Tree Trimmers and Other Pests

It's much easier to get the bettles out of the trees than it is the tree trimmers—who are sometimes referred to in the California Southland as "people trimmers."

When I was Grand Seigneur of my former estate, "Lost Perspective," I called in a representative group of tree specialists to give me an appraisal of the cost of pruning and fixing up a hangdog stand of beddraggled oaks. The bids ran from $75 (a colorful Codger who promised to come every Sunday for a year till the trees looked "fine as silk") to $2,700! One quaint bidder arrived in riding boots, white polo pants, liontamer's wide-webbed belt and sola topee (no kidding). Talking a mile a minute, he told me immediately that this "tree racket" was only a "sideline." Actually he was an "actor," and "radio announcer," and on Sundays he couldn't work because he regularly played badminton with Dickie Powell. "We're very close," he said, showing me how close with his fingers. I was writing a picture at the time, but try as I might I just couldn't find a part for him.

Oh yes—about the trees—it finally set me back $480—it also set the trees back 20 years. They were pruned so far back that the place looked like a landscape by Salvador Dali. Gladys Lehman once spent $1,800 on a single tree on the shores of Toluca Lake. It started small—just one master trimmer and assistant inside the cavity of the giant sycamore—but like Mother Hubbard's shoe, it soon filled up—and like the sinister band in "Kind Lady" they all moved in and wouldn't move out.

CHAPTER V
Mud, Sweat and Tears

Occasionally you Easterners, Southerners and Midwesterners sneer and chortle at newspaper wire photos of Hollywood homes on bluffs and hills and canyons being washed into the center of the street by winter rains and floods. This is malicious fabrication and sheer nonsense. Homes are not only washed into the *center* of the street, but sometimes *across* it and onto another homesite. Which frequently makes for boundary disputes and cries of claim jumping.

Now there's a Hillside Home Rule to Live By—sliding houses, crumbling retaining walls, mud in your eye—or living room—is not an "Act of God" but due entirely to faulty excavation. If your contractor or architect grades your canyon or hilltop haven properly, you need not fear that you'll be eating mud pies for dinner.

When I first built my Benedict Canyon eyrie, Billy Wilder, fresh from the flatlands of Old Vienna, took one look at it and advised me to get a license plate for the front and rear—because surely with the winter rains it would float down the street.

It never did, but fate was not so kind to Allen Rivkin, among others, who spent a first night in a new home which also turned out to be his last. Around 1 a. m. the rains came and by 2 a. m. the mud covered everything except Allen, who by now was sleeping soundly on the front porch of the real estate dealer who sold him the house—anxious to sell it back first thing in the morning.

Allen's next house was a dream, which gets us to our next chapter.

CHAPTER VI
Rattlesnakes—Friend or Foe?

Allen, like many city folk, had an aversion to our reptile friends and although his next house, as I told you in the last thrilling chapter, did turn out to be a dream, it was also a nightmare. For the very first evening he took proud possession, he noticed a Diamondback coiled as a sort of reception committee on the Welcome Mat.

Reassured that this wasn't an everyday occurrence, he found the next day that it was an everyday occurrence. Like Genghis Khan, he brought in gangs of ruthless weed-choppers and killed every living tree, blade of grass and shrub for miles around—no green hiding place for the hideous creatures was left unturned, unmoved or unfilled.

The next night he took a deep breath and surveyed the nude, brown hills with satisfaction. The next breath—he caught and held—for over his feet was slithering something at least six feet long! He didn't stop to discover that it was only a friendly King snake come to congratulate him for gettind rid of the King's sworn enemy, the rattler.

Allen loved the house and didn't want to give up so easily. After a nerve-settling vacation in Bermuda, he was ready to face the problem squarely. The censensus of both the M. D.s and the consulting psychiatrists was that he must overcome his aversion to snakes by getting used to them. "Go to the zoo, Allen, and look at them long enough, and you'll relax."

Need I give you the finish? Allen stared into those glass cages so long and so hard that he finally rushed out of the reptile house—with a new aversion to zoos, psychiartists, real estate brokers and the Atchison, Tokepa & Santa Fe Railroad Co.—because they owned the train that brought him to Darkest Los Angeles.

In all fairness to canyon living, which I personally prefer, I must report that my diary doesn't chronicle many rattlers seen face to face. Of course your eyes don't have to meet for you to know they are there. I do remember being rather unsettled after beating one's brains out just before a dinner for the Irving Brechers. I explained to Irv that ordinarily I wasn't troubled with rattlers—except in the summer time. "This one just came down to find water," I calmly pointed out. Irving owlishly pondered and then suggested: "In the future, Ken, why don't you just take his drinks up to him?"

One word of advice when you go house hunting. Have your real estate dealer point out your scaley neighbors so you can get to know them better. If you are bitten while smitten with the view, just keep cool, make a neat incision in the wound and suck some of the blood out. But *you* do it—*don't let the dealer do it.* He may not know when to stop. He's just supposed to get 15%.

So remember when tramping through the hills looking for houses—always keep one eye on the dealer.

CHAPTER VII
Beware of Recreation at Home

I'm sure you've heard plenty of hair raising stories about the skyrocketing costs of tennis and badminton courts; and swimming pools that began modest and kidney-shaped, then got out of hand and assumed such expensive pancrea-sized proportions that upon completion the owner had to move out and rent the house so he could pay for the pool.

This is a true story like that, only about a home golf

(Continued on Page 68)

* *All California soil is shaley.*

Always Gold In Them Thar Scripts If You Know How

By RUSSELL HOLMAN

When one suggests that I talk about what steps picture companies should take to solve the well advertised shortage of story ideas for pictures, it's a little like saying, "The weather lately is lousy; what are you going to do about it?" But seldom one to duck a challenge, I will stick my neck out as follows:

In the first place, there is no present shortage of story ideas upon which to base mo ion pictures. There are just as many around now as there were when the average major studio was making 35 or more pictures a year, and it would be just as easy to buy 35 or more of them and film them. The trouble is that, today, half or more of them would result in pictures that would be financial failures for the producing companies filming them and the theatres playing them.

In far too many instances the story that made a successful picture in 1945 would result in a flop in 1955. The risk, in negative cost, would be more than twice as much for the producer in 1955 to make the same picture. The risk to the exhibitor and the distributor would also be substantially larger than in 1945, since their costs have risen sharply also.

In 1945 a picture had to be exceptionally bad to avoid being a success. In 1955 it has to be exceptionally good to avoid being a failure. The public, as is well known, is extremely choosey today in picking its motion pictures. It has too many other things entertainment-wise to do. The exhibitors insist upon boxoffice insurance—big pictures, big stories, big name casts, etc. By the same token the studios must be exceptionally choosey in picking their stories and picture setups. While the supply of stories has remained constant, the standards for selecting them for pictures have by necessity become higher.

I do not believe that the problem of finding good stories for pictures today will be solved by encouraging amateurs to write stories. This merely breeds plagiarism suits. I cannot remember any notable pictures that resulted from international story contests, endowments of departments of motion picture writing in schools and colleges, subsidizing writers to write books and plays and the like. Paramount has tried all these in the past, with little or no good results.

We are always happy to listen to the well thought out ideas of professional writers or playwrights and to assist them into publication or play production with our dollars if we become convinced that the specific ideas have a chance of providing us with good picture material. We have optioned many such ideas, made pre-production deals for plays and the like. But writers normally do their best work when they are writing what comes naturally into their heads and their hearts rather than when they are slanting their ideas for a quick motion picture buck.

I believe that the industry's problem of finding real good stories to meet today's exacting standards would be helped materially if all of us, including me, engaged in this search would bring more intelligence and showmanship and picture-wise creative ability to the reading and analysis of the stories available. For example, I read a story called "Rear Window," written by Cornell Woolrich, when it was first published several years ago. It seemed to me to be quite an ordinary yarn that offered little for a really good motion picture. Yet Alfred Hitchcock read the same story and saw in it the basic ingredients for what turned out to be a top artistic and boxoffice picture. By his ability to select, eliminate, develop and create, he converted this slight piece into an excellent motion picture script in his head and then collaborated with a good script writer to get it on paper.

Trick Is to Make 'Em Tick

If the talk about a lack of story material for pictures is meant a lack of stories that are 100% suitable for pictures as written, there is certainly such a lack. There always has been. The 100% suitable-for-pictures story has always been as rare as uranium. The trick is, I believe, to possess the ability to spot the genesis of good pictures in the short story that has two really unusual characters; the novel with the two great picture situations; the play that everybody turned down for pictures because the playwright never knew how to write the third act, and you do; the plentiful story material with the 25% to 50% of pure movie gold in them that can be molded into great screen shows. This requires the special type of talent that really top studio executives, producers and directors and story heads possess, and it is too rare.

Cecil B. DeMille never complains about a story shortage. He is a great creative thinker and analyst and showman and develops his own fine scripts from scratch.

Whatever they tell you, "Gone With the Wind" was a best seller for months and available for all. David O. Selznick saw a great picture in it and had the nerve to risk the prodigious time and negative cost to develop it into script form and film it.

George Stevens visualized the script of "Shane" in an obscure pulp magazine serial.

George Seaton shrewdly analyzed the fine basic assets and considerable faults in the stage play, "The Country Girl," enriched the former and avoided the latter, and evolved a script that is much better than the play, and gave the industry an outstanding picture. Hal Wallis did much the same service for "Come Back, Little Sheba."

"Great book but impossible to lick for pictures," practically the entire picture business said about "From Here to Eternity." Dan Taradash and his co-workers licked it.

In other words, finding good stories for pictures is like mining for gold at a time when practically all of the good mines are known to the miners and they all get a whack at virtually the same mines. The number and extent of the really good mines can't be increased much. The great need is for the miners to cover all of the mines thoroughly and energetically and, especially, to have a special nose for pure gold and recognize it when they see it, even when it is covered with dirt and takes a helluva lot of digging and polishing.

IN THE ROMAN GLOAMIN'

By SAMUEL STEINMAN

Rome.

A—merican—A language and a culture which is centered in the lobby of the Excelsior. Its proponents are best described by the matron who sighed, "My dear, I try to speak Italian but they always seem to find out I'm an American."

B—ar—If you order anything but coffee you're a foreigner. If you order white coffee, you're a weakling. And if you want hard liquor you'd better find an American Bar.

C—aldo—In spite of its sound it means heat. The hot water tap has it in title only and if you don't expect any in your radiators, you won't be unhappy.

D—ubbing—Golfers may consider it a responsive note, but it means more to the English-speaking actors who rely on it for their livelihood. Many a frustrated flat-chested femme finds fresh triumph in knowing she sighs unsighted in the form of a slinky, stacked siren of the screen.

E—spresso—You want to sound like a stranger if you order your caffe with these words. It's also a method of sending mail rapidly—and some of the gals on the Via Veneto also seems to be espresso in that sense.

F—ree Rate—Once upon a time a dollar got you a lot of extra lire but now the fluctuation between 621, the official rate, 625, the advertised rate, and 630, the sometime free rate, is about a cent and a half to the dollar at the maximum. At the minimum it is less the shoe-leather you wear out finding the maximum.

G—iardino—Any backyard with a table becomes a giardino for summer dining purposes. Sometimes the garbage and the refuse of the winter are left in the corners so that you can appreciate the trouble to which they went to prepare for you.

H—idden Items—Rent may seem cheap to you, but always figure it is twice the asking price. To the rent you add taxes, light, gas, heat, telephone and extra furnishings as you may require them. All come with the apartment but so do the bills and if you like your repairs done promptly, you have to pay for them, too.

I—talian—A person who persists in making his presence felt, particularly in Rome where most foreigners feel it would be a wonderful country if there weren't as many of them there as there are. The Italians tear their hair and exclaim, "Stranieri!" but it is a losing game because the foreigners continue to come in increased numbers.

J—oe—A good Joe is an employee of the U. S. Embassy who does not smoke or drink or both. In proportion to his good habits his roster of friends will increase to help keep his record good at the Embassy Commissary. They enable him to buy his full quota of cigarets and liquor, taking the surplus off his hands as rapidly as he gets it, thus preserving his social standing without requiring him to pick up undesirable habits.

K—llos—A system invented by Napoleon in anticipation of the tourist invasion of Europe from the other side of the sea. By using measurements in kilometres, kilograms and litres it keeps Americans from knowing how much they are actually paying for things which are cheaper at home.

L—ove— A tender thing with the Latins. Recently three young men saw a foreign actress off at the Central Station and she was very much touched that they should have risen at an early hour to see her off. As soon as the train pulled out one said, "Shall we go over to the incoming platform to see the new ones arriving today?"

M—ontesi—A name which has kept Italians who don't like beaches anyway away from the seashore. For a native to admit he has been to Ostia is equivalent to confessing guilt in the most hushed-up, comic-opera murder case of the century. Most girls with moles would like to be Montesis.

N—apoli—This quaint seaside city is the home of a laughing and child-like people. They will rob you deaf, dumb and blind. They will cheat you and deny it. But don't hold it against them if you go there and find yourself victimized. They play no favorites; they even cheat Italians.

O—pera—Milano, Napoli and Roma have the three leading opera houses in that order. Knowing Americans sit in the gallery while impoverished Italians sit in the orchestra where the tariff can be 10 bucks a throw or more. The Americans pay for their seats, but most of the Italians get them for free through the government subsidy.

P—iazza—No matter where you live you are in the vicinity of a square which is known as a piazza but has no relation to a front porch or to the Italian tomato pie. On the piazza you will find a bar, a tobacco shop, a newsstand, a taxi stand, a bus stop and sometimes a few benches. Other improvements are optional.

Q—uirinale—The name of the royal palace, once the principal mecca of tourists before the films changed it all. Now, almost everyone wants to be photographed on Audrey Hepburn's Spanish Steps and in front of the Three Coins Fountain. As more films are made, the other classical names are being forgotten and one shudders to think of what St. Peter's Square may be called in time.

R—ebellion—Some Americans refuse to abide by the foreign system employed, for instance, in the bars where you name your poison, pay the price, offer the ticket and a tip and then get your *consommation*. Our favorite rebel bullies the bartender into supplying the coffee, tips afterward, and pays last. The bravest man in Roma!

S—PQR—The symbol of Roma. If we told you what the letters mean, if we knew, you would forget anyway. It has been the name of a novel, of a movie, and it can be seen on the cap of every conductor and street-cleaner. Favorite Roman game is to make up your own words such as "Sentimental People Quickly Return."

T—arga—Every car in Italy has one but it is not the pedestrian, as the uninitiated visitor, suspecting English with a foreign accent, may think. The targa is the license plate.

U—nsung Romans—Every city has characters who deserve mention for one reason or another. Our favorite quartet in alphabetical billing is Bergman, Ingrid; Bricktop; Fawcett, Charles; Lollobrigida, Gina. Bricktop runs a night club and spends more time collecting money for the Boy's Town of Italy, making her "the heart of Roma." Fawcett is an actor whom some of the phony Johnny-come-latelys regard as a joke, but he has lived half a dozen lifetimes in less than one and does more good turns than any dozen others. Gina represents the apotheosis of every Italian girl's dreams—the back-country gamin who consorts with queens, presidents and dictators. Ingrid for doing more than anyone else to give dignity to her calling.

V—illa—A form of Italian snobbery. Anyone who does not live in a hotel, *pension* or apartment speaks of his villa. Most villas have no central heating and little, if any, plumbing, but they sound good in the letters home.

W—Viva—There is no W in the Italian language so the local gentry have made it the symbol of approbation. It stands for interlocked Vs. Upside down it is sign of approbation, thus as Roma plays Milano in football, the signs would read (in Roma): W Roma; M Milano.

X—Totocalcio—It is pronounced "icks" and it is the key to the weekly lottery based on picking 13 winners in soccer (football) games played throughout the country. You mark your selection, 1 (home team), 2 (visiting team) or X (tie). Some weeks have as many as six X's and they determine the outcome.

Y—ES—No more a fatal word than SIN which is the name of a factory. Italians like abbreviated names and some of the leading business organizations are named CIT, SIAT, CIM, UPIM, MAS and a few names we'd blush to repeat.

Z—Vespa, etc.—Vespas and Lambrettas buzz all over the scene. Collectively called Vespas (like Frigidaires for refrigerator, they mean Wasps, but recently an American looked all over Italy, but not even a Vespa dealer knew where he could buy a Wasp.

THE VALUES OF RESEARCH

By CECIL B. DeMILLE

Research should function the way the general staff of the army uses G-2. An illustration is the part research plays in our current production, "The Ten Commandments."

C. B. DeMille

The research department started to function and participate actively in the production from the moment the subject for this picture had been chosen. It not only supplied the factual background against which the story is being staged, but, among other contributions, it brought to light long forgotten literary source-material.

The reader may be familiar with the fact that the Old Testament, in telling a story, frequently leaves people unnamed—or moves from one age into another without giving any clue to the intervening events that must have taken place. So it is with the story of Moses, as described in the Book of Exodus: The infant Moses is adopted by the royal family of Egypt and in the very next verse he is a grown man who kills an Egyptian taskmaster. What happened to Moses, as he grew from childhood to manhood? How did he fare as a member of the royal family? Was he considered a son of Pharaoh, a prince—or was he an obscure, ill-treated stepchild? These were some of the unknown factors I asked our research department to explore.

There is no doubt that the ability and imagination of our writers could have filled in this intervening period with their own creative writing. But, in dealing with a man of Moses' universal importance as lawgiver and inspired leader of the tribes of Israel, it is necessary to consult every available source that can shed light on the subject of Moses' early life—sources that could give an answer with respected authority.

Ancient accounts and histories, dating from the 1st century B.C. to the 4th century A.D., as well as the sacred writings of Islam, the Koran, filled in the gap left open by the Old Testament scribes. In addition, a wealth of Jewish commentary added its weight to the writing of the script. It can be safely stated that some of this historic literature had its origin in an era as ancient as the Biblical account itself. This sort of research not only provides information—more important still it provides drama, the stuff of which pictures are made.

Applies to All Phases of Prod.

When it became necessary to design sets, create costumes, and make props, the proper use of research prevented the misuse of the all-important element of time. Conferences between the producer-director and the research staff, and in turn with the art-director, the costume designer and the set-decorator, for example, did establish a proper work-basis. Thus, an authentic style, a feeling for the period, became inherent in the very first designs. In these instances archaeological findings, and the interpretation of ancient events by more recent painters, illustrators and sculptors, were studied, discussed and applied.

It is not always possible to follow factual findings of any given period literally. However, if the element of authenticity—an honest feeling for the historic era to be portrayed—has been absorbed and applied by the writers, the artists, and the many craftsmen, it will add that much more conviction to the final work. It will influence the audience into the belief that it is watching reality unroll itself on the screen.

Whatever time and funds are allotted to research to help establish an over-all design pattern for the production, is money saved many times over by the time the green light is given to the three score departments which contribute to the making of a motion picture.

Today there is not a single studio without its research department. Yet, in many instances, it is considered a stepchild—a necessary evil. Frequently it is thought of as a department with only a negative attitude toward the making of a motion picture uttering the traditional: "You can't do that!" The responsibility for this feeling, where it exists, is to some extent the department's own making: Questions are answered only when asked—the atmosphere is that of an isolated library. But a far greater responsibility lies on the shoulders of some producers and directors for not knowing how to use and apply the vast knowledge imbedded in such a department, for not making research an active and positive participant in the making of a motion picture where research is required.

AGE BEFORE BEAUTY

By STIRLING SILLIPHANT

Hollywood.

There is an alarming tendency among many screenwriters in Hollywood today to confine their writing of feminine leads to girls in their nineteens and early twenties.

Stirling Silliphant

There are simply not enough good parts kicking around town for some of the industry's finest acting talents, those ladies who have ripened into the wide blue yonder of 35 and up.

Whatever happened to those brilliantly mature ladies of the past, the gals who could conjugate in Latin and who know for a fact that Lord Byron was not a new hotel in Las Vegas? And where have those memorable roles of yesteryear vanished, the kind of role Garbo had in "Ninotcha," or Bette Davis in "Dangerous," or Claudette Colbert in "Three Came Home," or all the Greer Garson and Irene Dunne things which had so much touching beauty.

In too much of the screenwriting of today, the toothpick school of dialog, few heroines know how to look fetchingly across a glass of champagne or walk down a marble staircase or dance to Straus. It's beer and Afro-Cuban and terribly, terribly taut.

I'm convinced too many of our typewriters are creating knowledgeable little blonde vixens who at 19 seem to have more answers than a Harvard brain machine and a lore equivalent to their lure.

Our 1954 heroines can strip themselves and/or a .45 Colt automatic with equal dexterity.

My objection is not so much to their prematurely begotten hep-hep quality as to the abiding premise in the minds of writers that youth among screen-women is compulsory or that it is, per se, the most commercial or the most exciting commodity Hollywood has to sell.

Look at the billing in the vast majority of film advertising: "Introducing Lily Libido, the new Dimension!" along with the typical, tired ad art.

When you finally catch the movie, Lily is seen strutting through a few scenes and flaring her nostrils.

Maybe this is a necessary appendage, if for no other reason than the fact that the boys in New York can't sell the show unless they have a handle. And it's not their fault either, because the guys on the magazines ask for this kind of art, and you have to give it to them, even if it means using beauty contest winners and one-picture starlets.

But the solid fact remains that few important films are ever sold to the public by such routine procedure.

Sex is where you find it and, believe me, it's not limited to the college crowd. You'd be surprised what goes on in Small Town, U.S.A., among the country club set, and all of them stopped counting years after 38.

As a boy I can recall summer dreams of being spirited away, right off the sidewalk during a fashionable game of kick-the-can, my abductor being some mink-clad older woman in a Caddy convertible—the whole theme of that charming Broadway play of several seasons back, BERNADINE. Frankly, in furtive moments, I still have the dream, although I am asked repeatedly by my children to stop hogging the can and clear off the street so they can kick it around themselves.

The Older Woman is a commodity, fellows, and we're not doing right by her!

MEMO-RIES of 1954

By PAUL N. LAZARUS JR.

Memo From: Studio
To: General Sales Manager

We are shipping to you on January 4 the first print of our new and uproarious comedy, "Mother Has An Operation." This has been previewed three times out here—in Glendale, Inglewood and in Pasadena—and we have never had such reactions. Believe it or not, we received twice the number of preview cards we have ever received before. Some of them were highly enthusiastic.

Obviously, because this is so hilarious a picture, it would be a grave error to screen it in the home office projection room. I would like, therefore, to have you and the boys look at it in a theatre and get the full benefit of audience reaction which, I assure you, will amaze you.

One word of warning: Since New York audiences may be too sophisticated for this type of attraction, I suggest you preview it out of the city. I've always found Camden, N. J., or Paoli, Pa., very responsive to this type of picture.

I'm sure this won't be any problem. Please take care of it immediately.

* * *

Memo From: General Sales Manager
To: District and Branch Managers

Beginning three weeks from today, you may begin selling "Mother Has An Operation," our hilarious new comedy starring Lolita Farber. Preview audiences have established this as a truly sensational hit. We will consequently only accept contracts at 50% of the gross.

* * *

Memo From: Talent Department
To: Advertising Department

Pursuant to your request we are sending Lolita Farber to Bend, Ore., for a personal appearance in connection with the world premiere of "Mother Has An Operation." I assume that your exploiteer will make all arrangements, meet her on arrival, etc., etc.

You realize, of course, that Miss Farber is not to be used for any radio or television appearances. We feel that she is not quick-witted enough to acquit herself properly on radio, nor does she photograph well enough for television, unless she is made up by her own makeup man.

In the event there are any newspaper interviews scheduled we would like all questions telegraphed to the studio in advance so that we may draft the proper answers. Because of the recent unfortunate publicity about Miss Farber's private life, we deem this a vital matter of public relations.

Also, please caution your exploiteer to prevent at all times Miss Farber's use of any alcoholic beverages. It only takes a small amount to set her off.

We feel sure that you will find her completely cooperative and we sincerely hope her appearance launches "Mother Has An Operation" on the road to the smash success we all feel it so richly deserves.

* * *

Memo From: General Sales Manager
To: Director of Advertising

Just what the hell kind of a campaign was put on in the first three engagements of "Mother Has An Operation"? I can't believe that any picture as great as this—if handled properly—could gross so little. Please see me.

* * *

Memo From: Director of Advertising
To: Staff

It will be necessary to design and prepare immediately a new campaign—for our feature release, "Mother Has An Operation." We have opened it in three situations and the business thus far is most disappointing.

While we have had no specific adverse reactions to the campaign, our information points to a rather violent reaction to the picture. In our first opening at Bend, Ore., a patron threw a bottle at the screen. Fortunately, it didn't hit the screen which was a new CinemaScope wide wide wide screen; it struck an elderly lady in the first row who suffered only a mild concussion.

It appears that the audiences in all three engagements did not consider this picture a comedy. Therefore, we should immediately prepare a dramatic campaign. Eliminate all adjectives such as "ho-ho-larious" and "gay-lorious." Emphasize the anguish on Mother's face, the doctor's scalpel, the viciousness of the sadistic nurse. Perhaps we can inject a hint of gangsterism.

The Sales Department has taken test dates two weeks from tomorrow to test the new approach. It is vital that all material—new ads, new posters, new trailers, new lobbies, etc.—be ready in ample time.

* * *

Memo From: General Sales Manager
To: District Managers

Please instruct your men that they may sell "Mother Has An Operation" for whatever prices they can get. We will no longer hold to our rigid policy of 50% of the gross.

* * *

Memo From: Studio
To: Home Office

One of our executives noticed that "Mother Has An Operation" is currently playing in Beverly Hills as second feature to "From Here to Eternity." How can our Sales Department permit such things? Here is one of the finest pictures we have made and we find it is sold down the river. "Mother Has An Operation" represents one of our top efforts in talent and budget and to find it handled in this way is intolerable. Why, when we previewed it in Glendale, Pasadena and Inglewood. . . .

The Quiet Ones

By MAURICE ZOLOTOW

The popular conception of the entertainer is that he is a loud, exuberant character, overflowing with egotism, who wears crazy clothes, drives oddly-colored and shaped automobiles, and has a compulsive need to talk on all subjects, especially himself. He is supposed to be "on" at all times. I guess that, in their respective sexes, Tallulah Bankhead and Milton Berle exemplify the cliche about all actors being extraverts. Well, the cliche happens to be right and one reason that it is such a pleasure to sit down and talk with actresses and actors for the purposes of magazine biography is precisely *because* they so emotionally articulate.

Maurice Zolotow

However—and of this the public is unaware—there is a minority segment who are at the opposite extreme from a Berle, a Bankhead, a Gleason. This minority are just as successful in show business and usually seem to be at ease before an audience. Faced with another human being in an intimate situation, however—such as an interview—they are overcome by shyness, a shyness intense to the point of mutism. These quiet ones simply dislike opening their mouths and talking. I first encountered this phenomenon when I latched on to Jack Benny some years ago in an effort to gather some data about his personality. My first encounter with the 39-year-old comedian occurred in the den of his Beverly Hills hacienda. We exchanged hellos. Then we stared at each other. He was absolutely wordless, distant, cut off. I tried making small talk. But every verbal opening was riposted either with silence or a mumbled reply. Finally, he offered me a cigar. I said I smoked cigarets. In desperation for something to break the silence, I said I had gone to highschool with one of his writers, Milt Josefsberg. "Yeah," he said thoughtfully, "Milt's a nice guy." And there (to paraphrase George Gobel) we were! For about an hour we fenced around until the pall of silence became so oppressive we went out for air. It was not until I had hung around rehearsals and script conferences for nearly two weeks that Benny felt secure enough with me to even discuss the weather.

Trying to formulate in my mind an explanation of this seemingly odd behavior in an actor, I came to the conclusion that some actors are highly introverted persons, afraid of social contacts with strangers, protecting themselves from expected rebuffs by a wall of shyness and aloofness, and holding such a low valuation of themselves as human beings—apart from their theatrical skill—that they dare not express the feelings, thoughts, reactions, moods that course through them lest they be thought silly or stupid or naive. Only when they have come to place great trust in you will you be able to have any really meaningful exchange of words with them.

Another of the quiet ones is Bert Lahr. With Lahr, even after two weeks you can't discuss the weather. His insecurity is so intense that he prefers total silence to the risks involved in any give-and-take conversation. When I had Lahr on my easel, we would sit, literally for hours at a time, staring at each other, without more than a few sentences being exchanged. Yet like Benny, he is a very gentle, warm and kindly human being—but he takes a lot of patience to know.

Sid Caesar is another member of the shy minority. He also can sit with you by the hour, in utter quietness, maybe sipping scotch straight, puffing cigars and glowering occasionally. (Lahr is also a glowerer, but you never know what they are glowering about, as the glower is a sort of tic, a bodily expression of some emotion taking place inside them). For several days I hung around Caesar without him saying more than uh-huh. When we had lunch at Al & Dick's one forenoon, he happened to remark to Cari Reiner—Caesar never felt safe at any interview unless a third, trusted person was along—that he had lost 45 pounds. I scribbled down the sole fact I had gleaned in a week of research—the number 45. Caesar frowned in great alarm.

"What did you write?" he cried. "What's that? What did I say?"

George Abbott is an extremely laconic individual. He sticks to the point. You ask him, "Did you have many conferences with Richard Bissell when you were working on the book of 'Pajama Game'?" and he will reply, "No." Somebody else would give you a two-hour speech on everything from Stanislavsky to Beamont and Fletcher when asked a simple question, but Abbott is strictly a "yes" and "no" man.

Among other members of the silents are Eddie Albert, Jack Webb, Perry Como, Maurice Evans, Imogene Coca, Dean Martin. Some of these can be articulate about their work—but freeze up when asked to talk about themselves. Others, like Dean Martin, can only be articulate about their hobby. On golf, Dino will hold forth for hours. In fact, he and his publicity man, Jack Kellar, *dragged* me around a golf-course for four hours one hot afternoon. I had to stand for four hours. It's terrible.

Believe me, in my business once in a while you really have to earn your money. Sometimes remind me to tell you about Dino's partner. Jerry Lewis. Jerry Lewis is not one of the quiet ones.

What Is An Actor?

An Affectionate Appraisal of the Clan by the Syndicated N. Y. Herald Tribune Columnist From His Current Bestseller, 'Champagne Before Breakfast'

By HY GARDNER

If all the actors and actresses who say in their biographies that they were born in trunks, were actually born in trunks, the trunk business would be one of America's six major industries . . .

Hy Gardner

Yet 99% of the cult who trace their place of debut to a trunk, parked outside a smelly backstage dressing room, honestly and sincerely believe that this was their portable delivery room.

I've met more song-and-dance guys and dolls born backstage on split weeks than the total capacity of all the maternity-ward beds in America. And I love 'em for their illusions just as much as I love them for their talents, their exaggerations, their persistency, their guts, their faith and belief in God and themselves. And I hope they forgive me for giving God top billing!

Actors aren't people. Though there are plenty of people who are actors.

Actors don't like to get up in the morning. But they'll stay up all night and all day if they can help some person they've never met to live an extra day by their devoted deeds.

Actors were the originators of the credo of blood, sweat, and tears. They give blood to the Red Cross. They sweat to make the Big Time. They shed tears when one performance out of a thousand dies a dud.

Actors are belligerent, gentle, cranky, jolly, silly, canny, phony, funny, sad, glad, drunk, sober, healthy, sick, stupid slick temperamental, sentimental . . . Actors wear toupees but not spectacles, elevated heels under flat feet, dress suits with torn shorts and holey socks.

Actors love to play death scenes and at a crony's funeral try to upstage the corpse and steal the final bow . . . Actors would rather have a front chaise lounge at Lindy's than a seat in the Stock Exchange . . . An actor'd rather have his caricature hanging above the pastry wagon in Sardi's than have a portrait hanging in the Metropolitan Museum.

The only thing an actor fears more than losing his mind, is regaining it . . . An actor prefers his name in electric lights rather than on bank books . . . His scrapbook is a dramatic demonstration of the power of a free press—to bulk it up he even pastes in the sour notices.

An actor would rather leave an impression than a tip . . . He'll spend dimes all day to leave a message with his own telephone service to say, "Howard Hughes called six times; why, oh why, don't you call him back!"

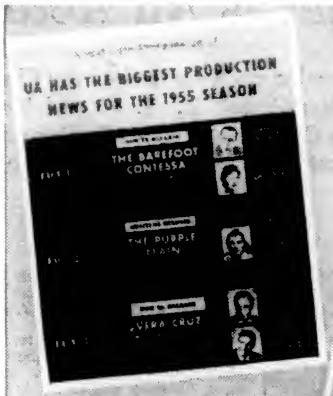
The actor had a miracle drug long before miracle drugs were ever heard of—he called it flattery.

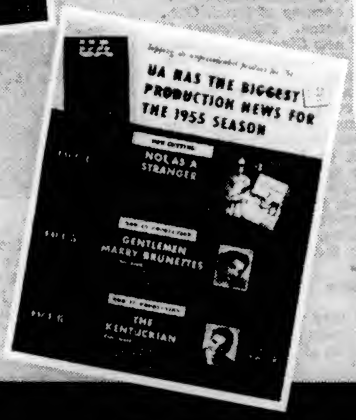
An actor is always on the go. He likes to sign up for a Broadway play, hoping it's a hit so he can complain he's weary of working in the city . . . An actor likes to go on the road so he can complain he misses Broadway . . . An actor likes to make a movie so he can complain about Hollywood . . . An actor likes any job where he can make a buck or make a pass at a pretty lass.

An actor falls in love at first sight, marries at second sight, and then falls out of sight forever . . . An actor is a motorized gypsy. He can be led and bled, used and abused, kicked and caressed and always comes up smiling —if anybody's watching.

An actor was the first to sign a loyalty oath—to himself.

I love actors. And most of all I love the kind of humor that runs in their funny bones. An odd kind, a philosophical kind, a wonderful kind, an exclusive kind of humor that proves with every studied ad lib that there's no business like show business, no people like show people. It's a tradition that will survive A-bombs, H-bombs, and Z-bombs. The only bomb an actor worries about is the one he may drop at the Palace.





Topping its unprecedented product for '54...

NO. 3 IN A SERIES OF ADS

UA HAS THE BIGGEST PRODUCTION NEWS FOR THE 1955 SEASON

FACT #7

NOW IN PRODUCTION

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

in Color, Widescreen
Starring Richard Burton
Written, Produced and Directed by
Robert Rossen

RICHARD BURTON

FACT #8

NOW CUTTING

SUMMERTIME

(Based on the Broadway hit, "The Time of the Cuckoo")
Color by Technicolor
Starring Katharine Hepburn · Rossano Brazzi
Produced by Ilya Lopert · Directed by
David Lean · A Lopert Films Presentation

KATHARINE HEPBURN

FACT #9

NOW CUTTING

THE NIGHT OF THE HUNTER

Starring Robert Mitchum · Shelley Winters · Lillian Gish
Based on the best-seller by Davis Grubb
Produced by Paul Gregory
Directed by Charles Laughton

ROBERT MITCHUM

"SOCK POTENTIAL!"

Packs thrill after thrill! Pungent, stirring drama! Well paced, exciting!"
—FILM DAILY

"SHIELD FOR MURDER"

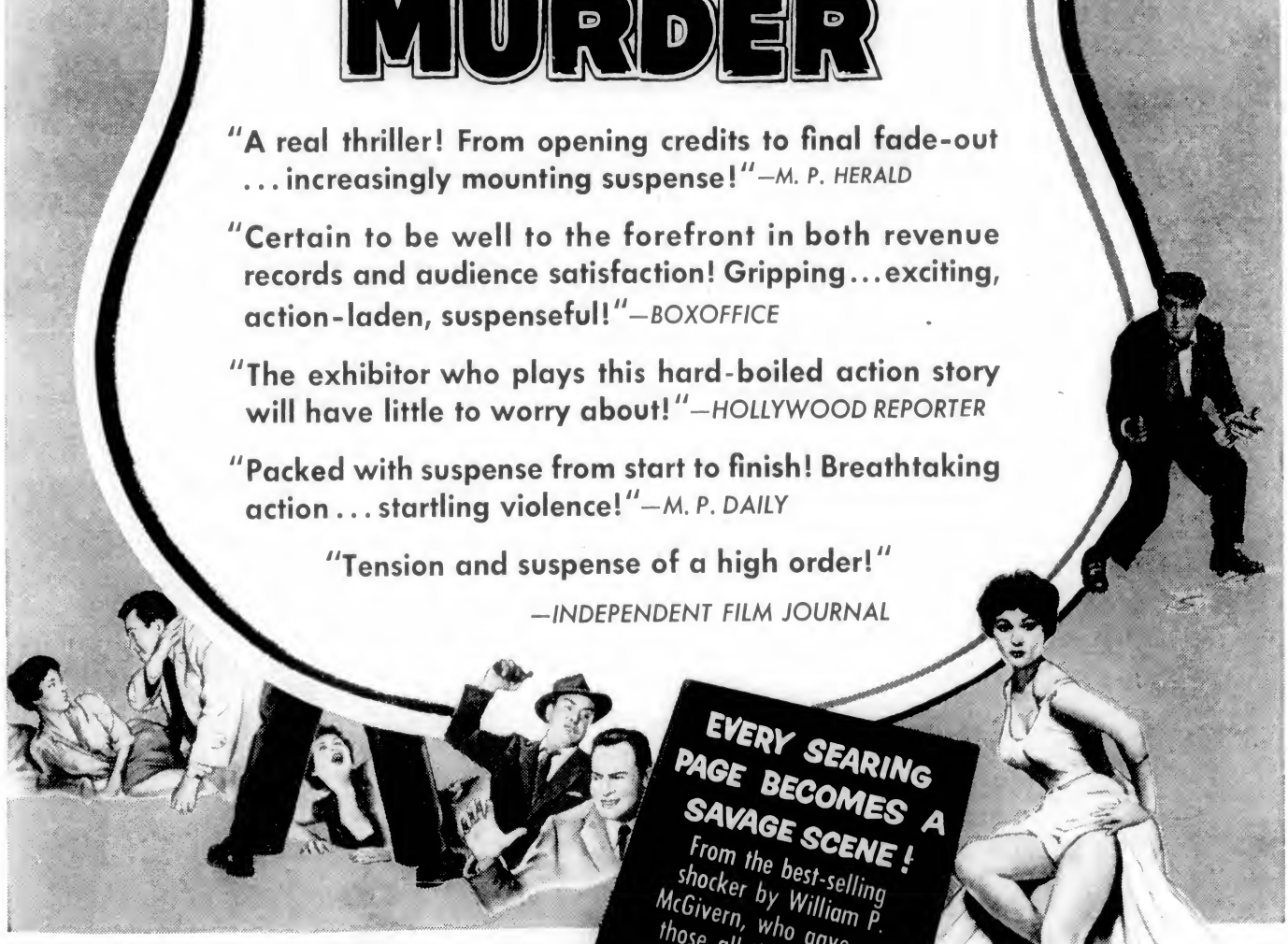
"A real thriller! From opening credits to final fade-out ... increasingly mounting suspense!" *—M. P. HERALD*

"Certain to be well to the forefront in both revenue records and audience satisfaction! Gripping... exciting, action-laden, suspenseful!" *—BOXOFFICE*

"The exhibitor who plays this hard-boiled action story will have little to worry about!" *—HOLLYWOOD REPORTER*

"Packed with suspense from start to finish! Breathtaking action... startling violence!" *—M. P. DAILY*

"Tension and suspense of a high order!"
—INDEPENDENT FILM JOURNAL



starring
EDMOND O'BRIEN

also starring JOHN AGAR | with Emile Meyer · Carolyn Jones · Hugh Sanders

Produced by AUBREY SCHENCK · Directed by EDMOND O'BRIEN and HOWARD W. KOCH

Screenplay by RICHARD ALAN SIMMONS and JOHN C. HIGGINS · A SCHENCK-KOCH PRODUCTION Music by PAUL DUNLAP

Introducing MARLA ENGLISH, the sizzling new screen sensation.

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FOR PRESENTATION BY

Romulus FILMS

Just Completed

DAVID NIVEN · MARGARET LEIGHTON
NOELLE MIDDLETON
IN
"Court Martial"
A REMUS PRODUCTION

★ ★ ★

In Production

JULIE HARRIS · LAURENCE HARVEY
SHELLEY WINTERS
IN
"I Am a Camera"
A REMUS PRODUCTION
FILMED IN ASSOCIATION WITH MOTION PICTURE RELEASING CORPORATION, INC.

★ ★ ★

And
In Preparation

"The Story of Esther Costello"
A REMUS PRODUCTION

★ ★ ★

ROMULUS FILMS · REMUS FILMS · LONDON

'THE IMPORTANCE OF MOMENTUM'

DCA Head Advocates Sufficiency of Product To Maintain 'That Movie-Going Habit'

By FRED J. SCHWARTZ
(President, Distributors Corp. of America)

There has been a great deal of talk in the trade for a number of years regarding the shortage of quality product; the reasons for it and the methods whereby this acute shortage can be corrected.

I head this article "The Importance of Momentum" because I believe the industry could fall into a serious trap if any segment of it believes that it can improve its own position by virtue of a short supply of product and the maintenance of a so-called seller's market. Having watched the short and long time trends in the business over the past 25 years, I have come to learn that we can build better business with in-between pictures if the playing of those pictures follow boxoffice hits. The reason is obvious to those in the trade that are acquainted with exhibition and its problems. A smash picture brings many people to the theatre who are exposed to the advertising via trailers of the pictures to come. The greater the exposures the greater the chance that the subsequent pictures have for doing business. Furthermore, going to the movies to a great extent is still a habit. It is true that the trend in the business has been in the direction of making it a hit business, with the public to a great extent picking the pictures they want to see. However, we must not discount the fact that habit is and will continue to be a dominant feature in helping maintain a high level of average business throughout the United States. Anytime we hit a slump in quality product and business falls off it takes two or three months of good product to build the level of business back to where it used to be. This means that the good pictures that are shown in the build-up period sustain a loss to the producer that owns them, to the distributor that distributes them, and to the exhibitor that shows them.

It is, therefore, to the advantage of all segments of the industry to see that momentum is maintained. It can only be maintained through as consistent a flow as possible of quality product. The entrance of any quality picture into the motion picture industry has the effect of bringing additional patrons back to the theatres of the country and "Maintaining Momentum" to the benefit of all parties in the industry and not to one particular branch or one particular company. Concisely anything that contributes additional quality product contributes to the welfare of the entire industry.

2 Major Problems

There are two major bottlenecks to the problem of securing additional quality product:

1. Showmanship ideas.
2. The scarcity of creative talent: stars, directors, writers, etc.

As to No. 1, any new company thinking in showmanship terms, sooner or later, has to come up with some additional showmanship ideas. This is in no way intended to take away in the slightest the wonderful contribution of thinking on the part of the existing major companies, but the more organizations there are in the industry that have dedicated themselves to creating quality product, the more ideas have to flow, one company stimulates the other, and all become more creative. Ideas and creative thinking are hard to come by and of those, not too many pay off. Any additional companies dedicated to this concept, in accordance with the law of averages alone, are bound to introduce new thinking and additional ideas. This by its very nature must be a partial answer to bottleneck No. 1.

As to the question of creative talent, various branches of the industry point at others within the industry, each blaming the other. The producer says that he does not want to put an unknown in the picture because the exhibitor will not buy. The exhibitor on the other hand is inclined to new faces because he feels that there is not enough of the current supply to keep his market satisfied with quality product throughout the year. The distributor finds himself in the crossfire and blames both. I believe that the public will think personalities as important as the industry makes them.

New Marquee Values

There is wonderful talent around, and will continue to be around, that does not get proper consideration and proper breaks in pictures. It is up to the industry as a whole, to the producer, distributor and the exhibitor all working together to make these personalities and this talent important in the eyes of the public. A little showmanship, and some dollars spent here and there by producer and exhibitor alike to build this new talent, will create a much larger pool of talent and answer bottleneck No. 2.

Another answer to building new talent is the possibility of additional co-production with European partners. There are many European stars, with great personalities and with tremendous dramatic ability. These stars today in the main are unknown to American audiences. Co-production should couple European and American personalities, the Yanks as b.o. bait in the U.S., but the European star in such a picture should be made important. Audiences should be exposed to the quality of these people and in so doing we will be building new values for subsequent product.

In the ultimate, the public makes the stars, and it is up to us, as professionals, to be acute enough to recognize the potential star in a relative unknown and to place our bets accordingly. If we all are willing to gamble on our confidence, we may find the answer to bottleneck No. 2.

What Kind of Pix Needed? Good Product, Period

By MONTAGUE SALMON
(Rivoli Theatre, N. Y.)

As the exhibitor goes into a new year, he would do well to take stock of the various factors affecting his industry to determine where his best interests lie.

Is there too much concentration on pre-sold properties; what effect will the entry of new production-distribution firms have; what type of pictures will help at the boxoffice? These are only a few of the matters which the exhibitor must ponder as 1955 is poised at the starting line.

There can never be too much concentration on pre-sold properties and the effect of the entry of new production-distribution firms can in no wise be determined as yet. It doesn't matter how much money they will spend, what talents they will use, what type of pictures they will make. Let's see the completed product. If their pictures will make money, they obviously will have a pronounced effect. Nothing else matters.

I don't like the trend of fewer and bigger pictures. A so-called big picture isn't necessarily a good picture. Let's have more good pictures—big, small, or of in-between size.

Toll television is a threat to the film theatre, even as sponsored tv is, for anything that tends to keep the public at home and thus prevent it from going to the theatre, is a threat. And talk of an industry-sponsored tv show is sheer madness! The film industry would be encouraging the film going public to stay home, thereby helping to finish itself off.

The question most often put to the exhibitor—"what type of picture will help you at the boxoffice?"—is no comedies, nor tragedies, nor westerns, nor fewer pictures, nor bigger pictures. The type of picture that will help me at the boxoffice is a good picture!

STIMULATE WRITING TALENTS OF VETS

Bill Ornstein, M-G-M trade contact in New York and author of "Ma and Me" and "Deep Currents," will do a pitch on behalf of the Hospitalized Veterans Writing Project on the Jan. 7 "Down Memory Lane" ABC-TV show of Joe Franklin's.

Writer will try to whip up interest among shut-in vets to do something creative, what with an annual contest paying off $2,000 in cash and as much in writers' tools, in addition to quarterly contests where money and merchandise will be parceled out.

250-600 Prints: Depends on The Film's Selling

By CHARLES J. FELDMAN
(Universal Sales Manager)

It would be simple to cover the much discussed print problem through use of figures only. However, that would merely be an easy exposition of the subject, it would explain nothing and would unquestionably bring cries of "not enough" from some quarters.

The extremes in print buys vary as the distance from North to South Poles. They are dictated completely by the type of picture one is releasing and the manner in which it is being released.

At one extreme we have the so-called art type picture, some of which have been distributed with as few as 55 prints. The simple facts are no one wishes to play that picture except as it is proven in each individual playdate. Thus there is an abundance of prints from the outset. The other extreme is the national saturation pattern in which there have been cases of more than 600 prints being employed on a picture. Surely this is not calculated to satisfy anyone who wishes to talk of prints in numbers only.

An average picture, the feel of which you must get from its earliest playdates, may be launched with as few as 250 prints. These are expanded as bookings come in. There is no hesitancy to buy additional prints to service the earliest bookings because the first few thousand dates are generally of a nature that justify purchase.

Incidentally, your local manager is pressing you constantly in order to maintain his volume of business and the booker is trying hard to please the exhibitor whom he knows personally as a customer and a friend.

A new problem is the CinemaScope picture, especially if released to conventional accounts on their regular availability (which is Universal's policy). We then must provide four-track magnetic type prints, optical sound anamorphic prints, and finally conventional

(Continued on page 43)

Fewer But Bigger Pix K.O.ing Small Town Exhibs

By E. D. MARTIN
(President, TOA)

Columbus, Ga.

As the saying goes, "Where there's smoke there's fire", and there has been a lot of smoke from exhibitor camps of late as to the exorbitant film rentals demanded by production and distribution. Not all exhibitors are justified in their complaints on terms and trade practices, but there are many who are desperately in need of help. Most of these are the suburban and smalltown exhibitors for they are the victims of the national sales policies.

The trend towards fewer and bigger pictures, though satisfactory to some, has created an unhealthy condition within the industry and has given production and distribution a stranglehold on exhibition that is squeezing out many of the neighborhood and small town theatres. It is unreasonable to believe that this trend was intentionally perpetrated by production and distribution, but it is a condition they are finding very much to their advantage.

The entry into the field of distribution of new firms such as the Distributing Corp. of America, Hal Makelim, the improved production of the present small studios, and the financial assistance to independent producers through such plans as Exhibitor Film Financing Group, Inc., should, in time, alleviate the sellers' market and create a more even balance of power within the industry.

Close Liason

In practically every industry there is close liaison between manufacturer and retailer resulting in better merchandising and increased sales. Should this not be so in the motion picture industry? There is a grave need for more harmonious relationships and understanding of each other's problems between production-distribution and exhibition; today more than ever. All members of the industry should strive to bring this about. Plans are under way for an all-industry conference. This should be the beginning—at least, let us hope so.

Truly great pictures are deserving of advanced admission and the public has shown a willingness to pay an increased price without too much opposition. But too many pictures of late, many not deserving, have been shown at advanced admission and the public has shown some opposition to this policy. This has been caused by some exhibitors reaching for a quick buck, but mostly by the terrificly high terms demanded for these pictures which has in turn forced the admission price upward in order for the engagement to be profitable to the theatre.

Third dimensional pictures could still be the greatest thing that ever happened to the industry, if a method could be found where it could be shown without glasses and faulty projection. Three-D, as we know it today, was grossly mishandled by the industry and all can be blamed for its rapid decline and seemingly evident destruction.

Newsreels and short subjects are still an important supplement to the feature programs of theatres regardless of widescreen, CinemaScope, VistaVision etc., and we should encourage the producers to make these subjects in the new processes so that a theatre's program may flow smoothly and the picture on the screen move with continuity as to size and scope.

Where television has been used with saturation campaigns we have found it to be a very effective advertising medium. Conclusive proof was the wide range of grosses between theatres near and far from television stations on pictures that carried special television campaigns. From exhibitors to whom I have discussed local television advertising there was indicated a wide variance of opinion as to the proper method and program. No one seems to have found the best answer and a great deal of research is needed in this field for many theatres would like to use television advertising.

Since subscription television is still a relatively unknown entity, one must hesitate to give his opinion on the subject. What its impact will be on the box office cannot be known, but one thing is sure—it will not be good.

UA Ad Veep On Pix Publicity Methods

By MAX E. YOUNGSTEIN

Minimum budget needs in launching a film vary from city to city. But in today's market my rule of thumb is that the overall campaign has to cost approximately 10% of the total gross. This is much more expensive than in past but many factors have compelled the increase.

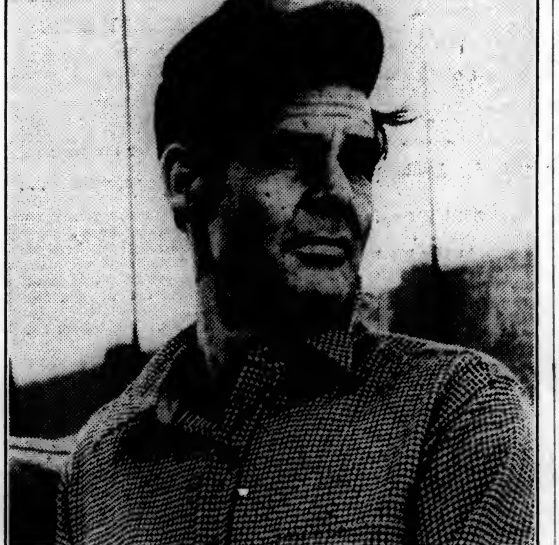
One of my big personal beefs is that very few exhibitors spend anywhere near this amount for merchandising and promotion. If they ever did and the distributors did the same, we all would see one of the most startling upturns in our business. Everybody keeps screaming about some new approach to merchandising films but it seems as if there aren't many people who are prepared to allocate the necessary dollars to try out the new methods.

Part of the promotion picture is the premiere and this is a big headache. We have to be very careful in the type of picture we choose for premieres but if the picture is right then all the effort and headache is worthwhile.

As for media, we at United Artists determine this by the subject matter of each film and the available budget. We are using tv more than we ever have but in most cases we are using it as an additional weapon rather than a substitute. The number of times where it has been used as a substitute are very few. Incidentally, I'm confident that an industry-sponsored tv will eventually come about. The best way would be to concentrate on the Academy Awards program. It's a toughie to put over because each company wants to promote its own films.

As far as fan magazines are concerned, I think they have a great potential for publicity and advertising. But I think they are missing the boat and I, for one, have not run any fan mag advertising for better than four years.

My beef is a simple one. The fan mags have a list of popular stars, determined from fan mail, polls, etc. A personality not on that list has no chance of ever getting front covers or important layouts. In my opinion this arbitrary basis for determining editorial content has done much to prevent the rise of many new stars who would be valuable assets to the motion picture industry and, therefore, help the fan mags in turn.



ROBERT RYAN

MY CHICAGO ROMANCE

By OTTO A. HARBACH

When, last August, through ASCAP I was invited to be a guest of honor at the Chicago Music Land Festival, there was climaxed for me a romance that started 63 years ago. It started with a dream I had in Salt Lake City in the fall of 1891.

Otto A. Harbach

My dream was to go to Knox, a small college at Galesburg, Ill., not far from Chicago. At the time it looked like a dream and nothing more—until I met one day a Mr. Parsons, who besides being a Utah sheriff was also a prominent sheepman. He told me he was shipping to the east three carload of sheep; would I care to go along as sheeptender? All I had to do was this: ride in the caboose, and every time the train stopped look through the sheep cars and be sure no sheep had fallen down to be trampled to death by their friends and neighbors.

The idea did not appeal to me until I learned their destination was to be Chicago! The deal was made, and one night two weeks later another boy and myself were sitting in a caboose at American Falls, Idaho, with three two-decker cars filled with our bleating charges on their way to slaughter in the stockyards. Not a rosy beginning for a romance, but the stockyards were in Chicago. There was the thrill.

It was not to last, for at Omaha I was told that from there on only one helper was allowed to ride free. Luckily I had enough money for a ticket to Galesburg, and in a few days I was enrolled in the college of my choice—with Chicago far away and out of my life.

But not for long. The name of the big city was again whispered to me—this time in the name of Dr. D. K. Pearsons, a Chicago philanthropist who, among other generous gestures toward small colleges, had established the "Pearsons Fund" at Knox. From this fund, indigent students could borrow money for tuition, which I did.

But Chicago was still in my blood. The dream of seeing the big city was still with me. Often when I sat milking Prof. Churchill's peaceful cow, I thought of the stockyards. I hoped she never would see them. But ever with me were the embers of a lost romance.

Then unexpectedly, two years later, they burst into full flame again.

It was 1893. The Chicago Columbian Exposition was opening in May. College boys everywhere were being invited to accept positions as guides and "chair boys." In June of that year I found myself pushing gouty men and fat ladies over the 176 acres of the paths and bridges of Jackson Park, which had been turned into a fairyland of lovely lagoons and lawns; 188 acres were covered by buildings, all fine examples of classic Greek architecture, never before or since has there been such an Exposition. The world was at peace. It seemed that every country on the globe was represented. The huge Manufacturers' Bldg. was filled with wonders of Science and Art. While Little Egypt wiggled on the Midway and Flo Ziegfeld proudly displayed Sandow, the Strong Man, and John Philip Sousa's new military band played and the Congress of Religious listened.

At night when thousands of lighted candles in colored globes glowed like living flowers over acres of lawns—while somewhere on a lagoon some Caruso voice was singing—or somewhere in a gondola a lovely lady's laughter came faintly through the night—I wheeled my chair and listened. Talk about your enchanting evenings!

But I was not satisfied. This was not what I'd been dreaming of and hoping for. It was not Chicago.

So whenever there came an opportunity when I was free from transporting human livestock I'd get on the Cottage Grove cable car for a trip uptown to where the Elevated Loop was being started.

Yes—one of my first trips was to the stockyards that had once sung to me a siren song. I didn't like the song and hated the smell. But of roaming the streets I never tired.

The Jukebox's Antecedents

One day on State Street I wandered into a Hall of Mysteries. I saw a little box with two earphones attached. I dropped a nickel in a slot and looked and listened. I saw the moving picture of a lady dancing, and heard mysterious music. I thought I'd seen the end of human ingenuity! Little did I think that a half century later I would be worried by problems of "records" and "transcriptions" and that one day I would be facing a Judiciary Committee in Washington, discussing the jukebox—the descendant of the little box with earphones—and pleading that a law might be passed to give the creators of music a small share in the billion-dollar jukebox industry, which thrives on the product they do not have to pay for.

It was in Chicago too that I got a glimpse of life that later meant so much to me. At that time—1893—a great spectacle was being presented in the Chicago Auditorium. It was called, "America" and told the story of our country from its discovery by Columbus to the final saving of "the Union."

One night for 50c I played the part of a Southern soldier in the scene from the Civil War with 500 "actors" like me. I was herded on stage, across stage—and off stage! I'd been bitten by the theater virus, but it did not do its work until later.

A series of incidents intervened that were to give me a view of the City of Dreams from a different point of view. It happened in my junior year at Knox.

On Washington's Birthday of that year the Union League of Chicago celebrated by services in the city's high schools. They invited colleges like Yale and Harvard, Columbia, Northwestern, Michigan, etc., to send speakers. Knox College was among them, and by some strange good luck I was chosen to make my speech at the Froebel School.

That night I attended a banquet at which I heard Senator Beveridge attack William Jennings Bryan, who was making his fight for the cause of Free Silver. On the afternoon of the next day I found myself again on the stage of the Auditorium where, a few months before, I'd cheered so gallantly for the South. Now I only sat in silence and listened to orations by Archbishop Ireland. I don't remember his speech, but I'll never forget the sea of faces in that audience.

The thrill of that Auditorium audience was still with me when I found myself back at school facing graduation. I suddenly found myself at a crossroads.

One day at the Fair my chair passenger had been a lovely lady. She had asked to be taken to her husband's exhibit in Machinery Hall. It proved to be the exhibit of F. C. Austin, whose factory was at Harvey, a suburb of Chicago. He manufactured earthmoving machines. On the way to the exhibit Mrs. Austin had engaged me in conversation. At college I had just finished a course in Greek architecture. I regaled her with what I had learned about Corinthian, Doric, and Ionic columns. The result of that incident was an invitation to dinner at the Austin home on Lake Shore Drive, and later on, an offer of a position in the Austin Company. Chicago had certainly been good to me. But blessings, like troubles, never come singly.

At Commencement at Knox I met two men. The founder of the Pearsons Fund, to which I owed $300, and Dr. B. S. Penrose, the newly-elected president of Whitman College in Washington, which had just received a large gift from the Chicago philanthropist. I was offered a position at Whitman to teach English and Public Speaking.

Walla Walla to Broadway

I discussed the situation with Mr. Austin. He said, "You'll never make any money in oratory." Heaven knows he was right—but as Dr. Pearsons said, "Money isn't everything." So the die was cast. I turned my back on Chicago and went to Walla Walla. Years later, I learned that in the theatre when the director wanted to get the effect of an offstage crowd he had his actors repeat over and over again, "Walla Walla," "Walla Walla." I'm not trying to indicate that the name had anything to do with my ever going into the theatre, but it does remind me that my work at Whitman did have a lot to do with my battle with the stage.

At any rate, after six years of teaching boys and girls how to stand before an audience and speak their thoughts simply and sincerely, I found myself doing the same thing with people in the theatre. And strange to say, I've found once more that Chicago was willing to help me, for it was in Chicago that may first attempts at being an author were given a hearing.

I had been given an opportunity to write the lyrics for a musical farce called "Three Twins." It opened at the Whitney Opera House in Chicago. Chicago liked it, as did New York later on.

Then came "Madame Sherry." Chicago was the first to OK its "Every Little Movement." Then "The Girl of My Dreams," in which the 7-year-old daughter of Hyams & MacIntyre sang about "Doctor Tinkle Tinker of Old Toy Town." Then "High Jinks," with its "Something Seems Tingling." It wasn't until Amy Leslie and other Chicago critics had given it their blessing that it later was heard in New York, Australia and London.

And as for genius in production, go some time and witness what Phil Maxwell is doing yearly for the Chicago Tribune's Charities Incorporated. You will see action not only stupendous, but colorful and beautiful, with a cast of 80,000 people watching 5,000 performers going through intricate stage business without a hitch.

As I sat with my wife and family watching, I thought of the devious ways which through 61 years had brought me there, and my heart was filled with gratitude to the American Society of Composers, Authors & Publishers, and Mr. Maxwell and the Chicago Tribune, who had seen fit to invite me there.

It was indeed a wonderful climax to a romance that started in Salt Lake City so many years ago.

Actor's Prayer

Dublin.

On the wall of the manager's office in the Theatre Royal here, hangs a copy of "The Actor's Prayer":

"Once again, O Lord, we are about to open up with new hopes, new energies and no cash in a new town . . . Help us to obtain a little credit. Confound our landlord, O Lord.

"Shower upon us as much fine rain as possible to drive the people in—but not the heavy rain that keeps them at home.

"Above all, good Lord, help me to help the young and promising. Stop them from what I can't stop if audiences like them and they get swell-headed, which prevents them getting any further. Keep them from vanity, backbiting, and pinpricks which upset teamwork.

"Let their love affairs be all above-board. May the spirit of this company be the spirit of good troupers, and if we can last until autumn I won't look any further."

What Writers Should Know

By HERB HARTIG

Conversations should be limited as much as possible to the phrases: "What can I tell you?", "Would I lie to you?", and "I got news for you *(sic)!"* Memorize these and try them in a variety of inflections and stresses. A penny-arcade recording booth might be helpful here. These phrases add professionally to your mien. Linking all phrases, and substituting for the passe pause, is the word "like." Use it.

Money is no problem to your clients . . . until you mention it. Then you are told:

(a) "Listen, I used to give money away like water, and like I been rooked by more durn writers."

(b) "I can throw a lot of business your way."

(c) "Like I can pay you off when I'm working, but I can't work until I get an act to audition with."

(d) "I'm headed for the top, and who do you think is going with me?"

Do not laugh at jokes. The tellers are liable to rehire their old writers.

Charcoal flannel will look as good as new if you pick up fuzz from dark blankets.

Receptionists always have a spare crossword puzzle.

Whereas a crib from Benchley or Perelman would be recognized, hardly anybody nowadays reads Leacock.

Fashion models keep from starving by eating one big meal a day: the one you buy.

The B/G will keep refilling your cup of coffee. Coffee at the Automat is less plentiful, but they have tables and you don't have to tip.

The William Morris Agency has the nicest washrooms in the City of New York.

Kools last you longer, because less people mooch them.

It is not deceit to appear on Monday with a Sheepshead Bay tan and announce: "I just got back from The Coast."

Say periodically: "I'm quitting the business." This has a nice hollow ring, especially when everybody knows the business has quit you.

Do not despair. What though you be out of work today? What though there be hundreds upon hundreds of writers just like yourself? Sooner or later you will get your turn. Sooner or later you will all have been on the Red Buttons show.

There is such a thing as too much coffee.

LONDON'S TOP LAYER

By RICHARD MEALAND

London.

A few months ago, on a bomb-site in the old City of London, the bulldozers started digging an excavation for a new office building. They went down through brick and plaster rubble, to burnt wood, to flint and mortar, to river silt and flood deposits, and finally hit brick tile and ranks of fashioned stone. The archaeologists were called in. While modern machines stood aside impatiently, the experts on antiquity went in with shovels, trowels and brushes. And they unearthed a Roman temple, several thousand broken tiles and pots, remains of tessellated floors, and some pieces of sculpture, one of which was the head of Mithras, a lesser Roman god.

Richard Mealand

Thirty-five thousand Londoners, in the course of the next couple of weeks, came to look at Roman London before the temple walls were dismembered, lifted out and taken away for later reassembly on some less desirable corner of the crowded city. The bulldozers, snorting at the delay, moved in again, levelled off the hole where Mithraic followers once performed their curious rites, and the building was resumed.

Had the machines dug deeper, they would have uncovered more layers of early habitation, evidences of pre-Roman, British occupation, and below that undoubtedly the crusted metals and charred bones of the Bronze and Iron ages, and lower still, the chipped flints of the Briton known as Neolithic.

London has as many layers as the history of man has eras. The Roman was laid down over nearly 500 years until about the year 550 A.D. Then the Angles and the Saxons started moving in. In Lullingstone, not far from London, where a Roman villa has been exposed during the last year, the Anglo-Saxon layer measures three feet deep, and on top of that are the "modern" layers, another two feet or so, which include the Norman and all subsequent periods of well known English history.

The American layer, you might call it, is at the top. So far it has no measurable depth, although one day at the corner of Jermyn Street and Duke of York Street, an American sailor dropped a silver dollar and it rolled into a sewer opening along the curb (or kerb). A thousand years from now perhaps that dollar may reappear in a stratification of what was once the bed of the River Thames. Which will be no stranger than the finding today of a statue of Bacchus embedded 10 feet below the foundations of a blitzed London pub.

The American occupation of London cannot be said to be depository. It comes in waves in summer time, reaches high tide in late August and September, runs off as autumn nears, and lies only thinly over the West End during the sunless winter months. Its action is more erosive than alluvial. It strips away the antiques, the cashmeres, the porcelains, the Georgian silver, the tweeds and tartans, and leaves little else than travellers' cheques and dollars which somehow do not seem to find their way into the surface soil of park and playing field nor into the cellars of disappearing slum areas.

In winter even the American shows (except, of course, for the ever-present Rodgers & Hammerstein musicals) give way to British pantomimes. The Palladium reverts to Mother Goose, Bob Hope is replaced by Norman Wisdom, and Dickie Valentine's coat buttons become more valuable to the squealing virgins of Tottenham Court Road than Frankie Laine's. Stratford-upon-Avon *(not* Stratford-on-Avon, please) withdraws into itself and gratefully forgets Shakespeare for three months or so. The Castles of Warwick and Windsor, the Palaces of Hampton Court and Blenheim, stand for the most part darkened and silent, devoid of the chant of guides, the clicking of cameras and the accents of Connecticut, Kansas and Oregon.

The Germans

This last year, for the first noticeable time since the war, the Germans came, bringing with them their Leicas, their Volkswagons and their marks. But the Americans far outnumbered them, and the American influence remains and will continue to be evident as the strongest external peacetime force probably ever exerted on the British Isles.

The American top layer on Britain is no longer a matter of controversy, irritation or strain. Now that the British have had returned to them most of the good things of living (with the possible exception of a freely convertible currency) they bear no further envy of Americans, and therefore no ill-will. What we have got they haven't, they do not necessarily want. They are not interested in our cars—too big, too ostentatious. Our coffee? They prefer the new Italian espresso bars. Our climate? Isn't it dreadful about that smog in Hollywood and all those hurricanes. Our lower taxes? You know, after all, the British Government doesn't tax capital, and an honest expense account is tax-free. Our heating and plumbing? It really is frightfully hot in America in summer and in winter it's stifling indoors; as for all those bathroom gadgets, one doesn't live in a bathroom. Our democratic political system? (Laughter). The high entertainment contents of our television programs? What! with all those horrible commercials?

And so it goes with the British, as it always has. The Romans came, saw, conquered and went away again. The Anglo-Saxons were absorbed, as were the Danes and Normans. Since 1066 no one else, except Napoleon and Hitler, has been strong enough or greedy enough to even try invading Britain. Until the Americans came.

But our contribution to the deepening soil of England so far has been very slight. Give us 500 years, of course, and we might be able to add an inch or two. . . .

Is There a Better Way to Die?

By STUART SCHULBERG

Wiesbaden, Germany.

The French call them *zazous*, the German call them *Backfisch*, the actors and entertainers call them names unfit to print. The fact is that Europe's bobbysoxers are getting even more pernicious than their cousins in the United States. American stars who look on Europe as a continent of good taste and refinement had better turn in their clipper tickets, unpack, and stay put if they expect to avoid the autograph-hunters, souvenir-collectors, and general nuisances who plague them at home.

The postwar invasion of Europe by American stars, plus the discovery of their own Lollobrigidas and Gerard Philippes, has turned a generation of European kids into hero-worshippers hysterical enough to rival those who gather in front of Grauman's Chinese or the Broadway Paramount. At last year's Berlin Film Festival, everyone down to the bit players had to have police protection just to walk around the corner. Maria Schell—Germany's top star today—was mobbed or manhandled and no one who shared her hotel in the four-power city will ever forget the night - and - the - day chant—"Ma-ri-a-Schell, Ma-ri-a-Schell"—which welled up from the crowded street. When, at regular intervals, she appeared at the window to toss a bouquet of flowers to the kids below, a regular war of the roses ensued, with each adolescent fighting for at least one petal to remember her by.

Producers, distributors, and press agents claim this hysteria is good for boxoffice. It means interest in pix is at fever pitch. And sure enough, the fever chart starts climbing every time a celebrity checks into a European hotel, attends an opening, or just tries to go on a sightseeing tour. In front of the Nassauer Hof, where Joe Cotten was living while making "Special Delivery" in Wiesbaden, teenagers waited in the cold and the sleet up to midnight, hoping to catch a glimpse of the "Third Man" hero. At a time when they should be home sleeping or studying, the *zazou* and the *Backfisch*, like Lili Marlene, are waiting underneath the lamppost.

Incidentally, Cotten noticed one crosseyed girl so often in front of the hotel, that he figured she was a pro, working for some central autograph syndicate. This gang no doubt was trying to corner the autograph market, send prices up, and grab a world monopoly of Marilyn Monroe signatures, thus giving the manipulators firm control of the bobbysox bourse.

A real frenzy takes these children when two or more stars make an appearance together. Then everyone in the stars' company is considered fair game, and the bobbysox pack falls on them like hunger-crazed wolves in the frozen tundra. Gilbert de Goldschmidt, the French producer, got out of a car with Eva Bartok and Michel Auclair—both big names on the Continent—and was forced to sign autographs for half an hour. "I'm nobody," he kept saying, using those famous last words—but the kids were taking no chances: anyone seen with Eva and Auclair must be at least a distinguished Italian director.

And yet, trying as it is for the average star—whether European or American—there are many celebrities on both sides of the ocean who know full well that these fans are their best guarantee of continued fame and fortune. When they stop getting mobbed—that's when they should begin to worry.

The late George Bancroft understood this better than most. Several years ago, he and B. P. Schulberg were visiting the tower of London on a sunny Sunday afternoon. All of a sudden someone in the crowd spotted Jawdge. He handed out a few autographs, the crowd grew, and so did B.P.'s fears.

"George," he said, "Let's get out of here before this crowd gets any bigger."

But Bancroft only smiled his famous smile and raked in three more autograph books. By now there were a thousand frantic people around him, and it looked like a long, jarring afternoon.

"George," implored B.P., "Let's get out while there's still time. This crowd can kill you."

Then, with the fans pushing and tugging and whooping it up, came Bancroft's classic reply:

"Ben, is there a better way to die?"

Vet Indie Yens

Continued from page 29

ing fewer pictures, in and of itself, will necessarily mean the production of better ones. Isn't it true that every producer who starts a picture hopes that it is going to be a good one? Naturally, every film made doesn't turn out exactly that way, but I think that under the law of averages, the chances of getting more hits, lies in the production of a greater number of films.

Just as no one can tell how a picture will turn out when it is finished, so no one can predict in advance which picture, or which kind of picture will be a great boxoffice success. This always involved guesswork, both on the part of the producers, as well as the exhibitors. I believe someone said, "How can we tell what the public wants when the public themselves don't know what they want."

Great For the Deluxers, But—

It is perfectly true that the production of fewer pictures may protect the key first-run theatres in metropolitan centers and the larger towns, but subsequent-run theatres must have a continued flow of product in order to fill their seven-day programs. These theatres cannot have extended runs as is possible in the large downtown houses and, therefore, if the shortage of pictures continues, ultimately many of the smaller subsequent theatres must close their doors.

The policy of encouraging fewer pictures, in my opinion, is an extremely shortsighted one. The very people who think that they have the most to gain, will eventually prove to be the losers under this setup, because if the shortage of product continues, if the small town theatre disappears, it is only a matter of time before the audience for the larger theatres, and the key-first-run houses will proportionately dwindle.

The success of our industry has been, and will continue to be based upon a large mass audience going to theatres in every village, town and city throughout the land. We cannot divide this business into small theatres and large ones, because they are inseparably bound together and the future of the industry depends upon what is best for all theatres and not for just a few.

Hypoing a Seller's Market

Another of the sore spots in the industry today has to do with the matter of film costs. Naturally, I'm not in position to comment generally about exhibitor complaints on terms. However, common sense would indicate that whenever the demand is greater than the supply, a seller's market inevitably results, and as a consequence, film costs will be more unfavorable to the buyer than to the seller.

Insofar as advanced admission priced pictures are concerned, I can only say as an exhibitor of neighborhood theatres, my experience has been that the public always resents the charging of higher admission prices, and our managers have a great deal of trouble whenever this policy is followed.

Of course, the industry has benefited greatly from some of the newer technological developments, such as CinemaScope, Stereophonic Sound, Cinerama, VistaVision, etc.; even 3-D, which ultimately proved to be a "flash-in-the-pan," was of some initial benefit in creating public interest in theatres. It is possible, of course, that if a single print 3-D process were ever perfected, whereby the use of polaroid glasses would be completely eliminated, that this type of picture might once more come into favor.

Can't Write Off TV Altogether

The future of our business, must, of necessity, be ciosely related to the developments in television. I agree with those who have said that the only proper place to really enjoy a picture is in a theatre, away from the annoyance and distractions that are present in the average living room. It would be foolish, however, to believe that toll television offers no threat whatsoever to our business. We know that in the past few years, almost a third of the conventional theatres in this country have closed their doors, and the responsibility for this fact primarily lies with the advent of television. Were it not for the help received by the partial elimination of the Federai admission taxes, the effects of television might have been even more serious.

Last, but certainly not least, I believe that the introduction of new blood into the field of production and distribution is a very healthy step forward. Companies like D.C.A., Makelim and the projected T.O.A. Corporation can only serve to stimulate and encourage the making and releasing of more and better films. If this latter condition comes about, if there will be an abundance of good product available for all exhibitors, the motion picture industry need have no fears about the future.

Kingston House Remade; Boxoffice Always Open

Walter Reade's remodeled Broadway Theatre in Kingston, N. Y., on Jan. 14 changes its name to the Community Theatre, the $250,000 renovation job having been carried out without actually closing down the house. It's now being billed as one of the—if not the—most modern houses in the country.

To launch the theatre under its new name, Metro will preem its "Bad Day at Black Rock" there. Kingston has been selected by Metro as one of the three U.S. communities to be saluted in an industrywide testimonial to motion picture theatres in which all distribs will participate.

Pa. Drive-In Buy

Greensburg, Pa.

Manos Enterprises Corp., which maintains executive offices here, has purchased the controlling interest in the Super Skyway Drive-In Theatre, Allentown, Pa. Sol Shocker stays on as managing director and a stockholder.

Ozoner, one of the first outdoorers to install sterophonic sound, will open on March 15 and will be enlarged to a 1,000-car capacity.

250-600 Prints

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type prints. That is a problem fit only for the new automatic brain.

A major problem is the increased number of houses that have moved up to play early day-and-date engagements. Many of these buy at the last minute, after shopping for the best picture available for the best terms—and the distributor makes every effort to have a print available even for such last minute requirements.

We recall an extreme example where 32 theatres in a metropolitan area played day-and-date. In planning the sale of our pictures we set aside this number of prints. Almost to a man our customers decided on a competitive release available at the same time, with the result all these prints were idle and it was too late to assign elsewhere.

We are certain all companies employ efficient home office clearing houses to quickly shift prints from one part of the country to wherever they may be needed. A distributor wishing to stay in the competitive race is on his toes to provide all the prints necessary (and a few to spare) to quickly and efficiently distribute a picture. Someone recently said when one side accuses you of doing too little at the same time another is proving you are doing too much—the judgment must be that you are doing about right. The purchase of prints is handled by businessmen of many years' experience and has become, as nearly as possible, a business science.

Some Great Newspapermen Recalled By Author-Actor

By BILL HALLIGAN

Hollywood.

I have been around for 50 years and I knew a lot of writers. I mean knew them, slept with them, ate with them and traveled with them and borrowed their money. Some times they borrowed mine. I like writers and a lot of them like me. My best friend today is a lad named Bill Corum and I don't have to tell you who he is. Clem McCarthy writes me every week. They are all fat and sassy, thank Heaven, and I hope they stay that way!

Bill Halligan

Back in 1899 I was working on the Chicago American. I was not a reporter. I was carrying plates for a staff photographer named N. S. Bernard but every one called him Barney. I carried a pad and pencil and made a noise like a reporter. Barney would take a shot of a group at a house show, a wedding, a political meeting, a dinner or a group on the clubhouse at a racetrack. You know how it is when a nonentity is photoed with a celebrity, the nonentity wants a copy of that picture and my job was to get the names and addresses of the nonentities. I never failed. Barney would make up some prints on Mr. Hearst's paper and the next day I would drop around to the addresses I had and sell them for a buck each. Nice work if you get it. Good for 30 to 40 clams a week. We split.

One day we got a call to go out to the stockyards where a strike had broken out. The boss sent a cub reporter along. When we got off the Halstad St. streetcar at Root St. we saw a mob of strikers beating an old colored man. He was bleeding like a stuck pig. We got several good shots but the cub reporter fainted dead away. Years later he wrote a best seller called "Nigger Heaven." His name is Carl Van Vechten.

Barney and I did a lot of work around the county jail and the criminal court. The sheriff, whose name was Tom Barrett, was a friend of mine. He thought I was a reporter. One day he called me in his office and handed me a telegram which read Governor Dineen refuses reprieve for Jacob Johnwalsky. It was a scoop and I quickly telephoned a man named Koenigsberg who was our city editor.

I went back and thanked the sheriff who asked me to do him a favor: "I want you to go over to McVickers' Theatre tonight after the show is over and bring a man named Wilton Lackaye over here. I promised him I would let him see the rehearsal of the hanging tomorrow. The name of the show is "The Pit." "I said okay and that night I picked up Lackaye and we headed for the jail. We stopped at O'Maileys for a couple of quick ones and then when we went to the jail, I showed my face at the opening and the turnkey let us in. We saw the rehearsal. They hung a bag of sand the same weight as the condemned man. It was a ordinary affair but Barrett met us and invited us to see the real execution the next day at 10. Lackaye said he would like to see it. I called for him the next day but the clerk at the desk said Mr. Lackaye had left positive word that he was *not* to be disturbed. They hanged Mr. Johnwalsky without Mr. Lackaye. The foreigner did not understand or speak a word of English.

They hanged him in Polish I guess. It was a long long time before I met Mr. Lackaye again. I was directing a play for Earl Carroll called "The Florida Girl" and Mr. Lackaye was in the cast.

A Jack Lait Exploit

Chicago was wild and woolly in those days and the politicians ruled the roost. The Chicago American started a crusade and the grafters all ran for cover. One missed the boat and landed in the county jail without bail. He was a big fish but they had little on him of consequence. The American stuck a reporter in the same cell hoping to get a lead but for three weeks the man, whose name was Brennan, said nothing. Then one night he opened up. His cellmate got the story. His name was Jack Lait.

I wonder if a certain V.P. of Columbia Pictures recalls the Brennan scoop. He was a cub reporter himself at the time, name Nate Spingold. I remember another great columnist who was working on the Chi Trib—he had the greatest byline I ever read, the initials of Hugh E. Keough, "By HEK."

Barnard got the gate one day and I got it with him. I was a well known bum for a year or so and then some one said I was funny and I went into vaudeville to disprove it.

In 1913 I was in a show out in Chicago. The show was closing and I needed a new act if I was going to fool them in the two-a-day. One day in Frank Houseman's Majestic Theatre bar I was having a drink with the VARIETY man, Johnny O'Connor. I told him my troubles. "I have just the man for you," he said, "come with me," and he led me up to the city desk of the Chicago Tribune. He introduced me to a long, lank, taciturn individual who took my $50 retainer without a smile and promised to have the act for me by Sunday afternoon when I was to pay him $200 more. He came up to my flat with the script and I gave him a check. I made it out to R. W. Lardner, later called Ring. It was the best $250 I ever spent and he told me that it was the first $250 he ever had in a lump. I gave him his start in writing for the stage.

Globetrotting With Kaufman

Well the years glide along. In 1923 I found myself in company with a columnist named S. Jay Kaufman taking a trip around the world. I couldn't take it so I quit in Budapest. We met all the top drawer literary celebrities. In London we had an audience with the Prime Minister but I was much more interested in a writer we had lunch with, a man named Hannen Swaffer. He looked like Corse Payton after a hard night but he wrote amazingly well. I wrote *Sime* (Sime Silverman, founder of VARIETY) about him and he afterwards joined VARIETY's London staff.

Kaufman and I got to Vienna where we had dinner with Arthur Schnitzler who told me that he had received the magnificent sum of $400 from Hollywood for his "Affairs of Anatole." He gave me a typewritten script of a story he had just finished. I gave it to Floyd Gibbons after I had read it but I never got it back.

From Vienna we went to Budapest, where Kaufman was honored by the Press Club. That night I sat next to Franz Lehar, of "Merry Widow" fame. He spoke English and we discussed America. Before the evening was over I was his representative in the U.S.A. The first day I was back I went up to see Roxy, then at the Capitol. I told him I could deliver Lehar on certain conditions. Roxy was interested until I said Lehar demanded 80 men in the pit and would lead the orchestra at only two performances a day. That killed the deal.

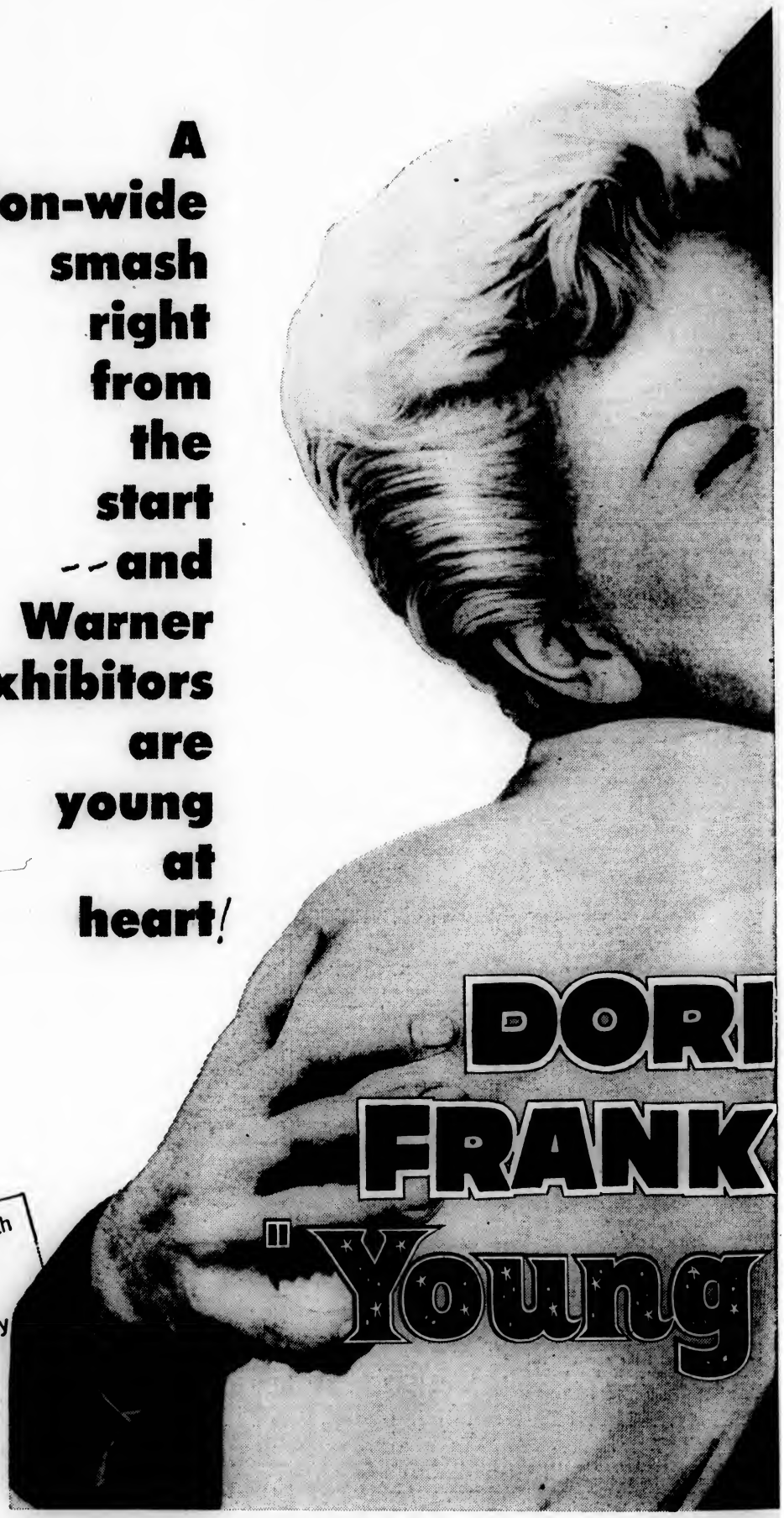
A couple of years later I got lucky one night and although it was nearing Xmas week I decided to go to Paris. A bunch of the "Follies" girls were appearing at the Moulin Rouge in Paris and I was interested in one of them. I got into town at 11 p.m. on a Saturday night and I phoned Basil Woon, author of "The Frantic Atlantic" and a correspondent for International News Service. I told him I wanted to go to the matinee Sunday and explained why. "You are too late by a day," he told me. The girls sailed for home yesterday.

"How would you like to drown your sorrows by coming to a dinner tonight at Durant's? I am the host. You will meet a lot of your old friends, all foreign correspondents. We call it the Rough Club and each month we throw one with a different host, it's my turn

(Continued on page 61)

A nation-wide smash right from the start --and Warner exhibitors are young at heart!

DORIS and FRANK both have just been voted the Nation's No. 1 Singing Stars in National Disc Jockey Poll by 'Billboard'!



'HOLD ME IN YOUR ARMS' *(Already high on VARIETY'S list of songs with the biggest radio audience!)* ♂ 'READY, WILLING AND ABLE' ♂ 'YOU MY LOVE' ♂ 'TIL MY LOVE COMES TO M

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E'♪ 'ONE FOR MY BABY' ♪ 'JUST ONE OF THOSE THINGS' ♪ 'SOMEONE TO WATCH OVER ME' ♪ 'YOUNG AT HEART' ♪ 'THERE'S A RISING MOON'

T BY TECHNICOLOR SCREEN PLAY BY JULIUS J. EPSTEIN AND LENORE COFFEE AN ARWIN PRODUCTION · PRODUCED BY HENRY BLANKE · DIRECTED BY GORDON DOUGLAS · PRESENTED BY WARNER BROS.

HEART-Y CHEERS FROM THE TRADE PRESS!

"It's headed for prosperous box-office! For both Miss Day and Sinatra "Young At Heart" is a topflight credit. They give the songs the vocal touch that makes them solid listening, and score just as strongly on the dramatics, complementing each other to make the heart-tugs all the more effective!"

VARIETY also DAILY VARIETY

"This is just what the box-office ordered! Everyone should fall in love with its warm human family life appeal. Warner Bros. have every right to burst a vest button for styling the story to suit the personable talents of its stars. They had the audience in the palms of their hands."

M. P. DAILY

"Highly entertaining! Solid family entertainment and fine performances that combine humor and pathos — with hit songs added!"

FILM DAILY

"Ticket-buyers should enthusiastically patronize this one! Has numerous assets to generate business-attracting word-of-mouth reaction!"

BOXOFFICE

"A picture to delight and entertain! Will build top business!"

SHOWMEN'S TRADE REVIEW

"Box-office gold in all situations! Excellent!"

M. P. HERALD

British Law and Custom Condition Criticism of Films; Distribs Don't Always 'Invite' Press to Openings

By HAROLD MYERS

London.

As a breed, critics are probably the same the world over and, in most respects, there is probably little difference between the film scribes in London and their opposite numbers in New York. Except in one major respect. There is no one in this capital who commands the same status as Bosley Crowther of the New York Times.

And, by the same token, there is probably little to choose between the London and New York exhibitor or distributor so far as they react towards the critics. They're jolly good fellows when they turn in a good notice, but they're out-of-touch highbrows when they volunteer a panning.

One major American company has withdrawn normal facilities to the majority of the national British press reviewers. The company concerned Universal - International, adopted this policy more than two years ago on the personal initiative of its local representative, Douglas Granville. On his orders they've ended the regular trade policy of holding special screenings for the press a few days prior to the West End opening of a picture. They are, however, prepared to accord full facilities to any critic who is willing to sit through the performance at a regular showing for the public.

Universal took this step because it came to the conclusion that too many of the critics were detached from public reaction. Granville argues for "constructive" criticism, although critics usually scorn this distinction as implying empty writing. "We are not trying to influence opinion, but we do believe that if a critic had anything worth while to say it should be said in constructive and not destructive terms," is the way U's man phrases it.

Do national press critics have any serious influence on the box-office? Granville reports that his company has just concluded its best postwar year in Great Britain.

While no other distributor has taken comparable action, a number of the majors are adopting a more selective policy in screening their pictures for the critics. Certain productions, with obvious b.o. potentialities, but with very little to commend them from a critic's point of view, are frequently slipped into release without any press showing.

Private Property Theory

Action of this sort is permissible in Great Britain because of the protection provided by the law. In broad principles, the legal viewpoint is that a film is a private property and a critic may only offer a public opinion if he's invited to do so. Any legal action that followed could logically be defended on the grounds of "fair comment." Another school of thought exists, however, which claims that it is a matter of public interest for the press to report on, and express an opinion of, new films and plays whether or not invited to do so by the management. (This viewpoint has been supported by high legal opinion and was acted upon by VARIETY's London bureau when one legit management declined the normal courtesy of opening night seats).

Nowadays there is a measure of tranquility between the film industry and its critics, but a couple of years back the entire distributing force found itself at war with the Beaverbrook press, mainly because of the consistently adverse notices that appeared in the London Evening Standard under the Milton Shulman byline. Acting individually, each of the majors withdrew its advertising from the group on the grounds that it was pointless to spend hard cash in advertising a product on one page while on another page readers were being advised not to buy that product. A great deal of animosity was generated and there were the familiar charges of a threat to the freedom of the press, but, whether by accident or design, Shulman was made drama critic and Beverley Baxter stepped in to take over the film column.

He (Baxter) is known for his independent mind but is generally regarded as being "kind." He summed up his role in a recent feature with these words, "The critic sees so many films that he must guard against the danger of becoming an epicure whose palate is developed at the expense of his appetite. Otherwise he is apt to praise the unusual and be grudging towards the conventional."

Jack Davies, a former critic of the Sunday Graphic, and now a scriptwriter, recently did a feature on the London critics in a fan magazine, in which he named Dilys Powell (Sunday Times), Campbell Dixon (Daily Telegraph), Fred Majdalany (Daily Mail) and Bevcrley Baxter (Standard) as the best of the bunch. This rating surprisingly omits Caroline A. Lejeune, the highbrow critic of the Observer.

Both Miss LeJeune and Miss Powell are universally regarded as the leading Sunday paper critics and, as contributors to journals with a "class" readership, often follow the familiar pattern of giving their accolade to foreign releases which only a small proportion of their readership are able to see.

Of all the London critics, only one does his column without a byline. It is a rule of the house in the Times that their staffers should be unnamed. For the record, however, let it be noted that Dudley Carew writes the film notes for that paper.

Indie Exhib's Prayer

Continued from page 21

mats; no different—better 'n fact.

3. DCA and Charles Boasberg on right track. Think of it—what tremendous assets; a distributor starting out without any lawsuits!

4. As our old Gus Sun mysic acts, looking into the Crystal Ball on our stage years back would say, "I can see it now, etc"—Yes we'll probably have a 3-D picture that will come along and do a boffo biz—you know the old change of pace. Plenty of big league pitchers getting by on that alone—change of pace—mark it down!

5. Gotta slip a plug in here for my picture, "Frankenstein Meets Gina Lollobrigida." This is fourth track stuff and looks at the European market! By the way what *are* they going to do about the fourth track?

6. Are newsreels now horse and buggy? Maybe. But turn this department over to the Ed Murrow and start visiting!

As we slowly emerge from the Valley of the Shadow some prayer must be offered the little fellow—the small town exhib and his family. His plight is desperate, his future uncertain, his heart is heavy, but now my task is finished and as I peer out my window my gaze wanders down into Kentucky, near Eminence, where for several months the grave of David Wark Griffith lay unmarked and unhonored till some of us chipped in a few bucks. And now the last rays of the setting sun cast their reflection on the little bronze tablet, and I like to think, and I know that no other industry is so dedicated to the spiritual, the unseen as are we, and I know our heart is big and conscience will not be denied. Courage! Courage!

Aussie Coin

Continued from page 3

Satchmo doing 22 appearances in Sydney and Melbourne.

Subsequently, Gordon - Reyes management brought in Billy Daniels and again scored. Armstrong's take will probably be exceeded by names such as Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra, Frankie Laine and Johnnie Ray.

Because of fast air transport across the Pacific, it has become possible for performers with open dates in the States, to pick up some useful coin in Australia.

On the other hand, while other managements are trying to muscle in on the big name thing, this has created a false set of values. Various American acts are asking impossible money, if played in theatres proper.

Also, one shrewd impresario figured wisely when he observed that there are probably not more than a dozen names big enough to draw the staggering stadium returns. After those, what then?

In legit proper, business is fairly healthy. There has been no diminution of interest in the vaude-revue that the Tivoli circuit vends.

The Tiv had Tommy Trinder, Allan Jones and Jerry Lester during the year, and successfully tried a musical comedy, "Zip Goes A Million."

The circuit, which also presented Jose Iturbi and the Vienna Boys' Choir as concert enterprises, has a sharp eye to further big-name imports for the coming year, encouraged (or goaded) by Lee Gordon's bonanza. Back from England, the Continent and the U.S. Tiv boss David Martin says he's signed Winifred Atwell, Maurice Chevalier and Bob Hope.

J. C. Williamson Theatres did well with "Call Me Madam" and has a current money-spinner in "Dear Charles." Boevansky Ballet has been a solid money-spinner for the same management, and Armand Perren's ice shows are still clicking solidly.

After variety type shows on skates, Perren staged "Rose Marie On Ice" which broke all records in Adelaide and scored in Melbourne. It opens Sydney Boxing Day.

JCW is backing Aussie play called "Pommy," and has "Paint Your Wagon" in Melbourne. Its big projects for the new year include an Italian grand opera company; "Can-Can" and "Teahouse of the August Moon."

Television is still around the corner, and likely to stay there for another two years.

JOHNNIE RAY

Criterion (N.Y.) Owner Does Some Fingerpointing at Exhibition

By CHARLES B. MOSS

This is the era of the happy showman—a confident if not exactly new breed.

His stamping ground is Sardi's, and Lindy's, the Pump Room and Romanoff's, and his talk is of broken records, extended runs, bigger dividends and greater things to come. The bears have been put to rout and the brave bulls are loose again, all the way from Broadway to Hollywood Blvd.

Charles B. Moss

But ever and anon some heretic will recall the black days of '50, '51 and '52 and be promptly squelched for his pains.

"Sam, it's guys like you had the industry jittery, you know . . . running around and getting on committees and being quoted in the trades and looking for solutions to a natural recession that just had to come, sooner or later. Remember, Sam, how I had it figured? How I kept saying it's just one of those situations that had to run its course, like bronchitis, or maybe the measles? You're getting to be a hypo, boy . . . Take it easy. We're riding the wave!"

That's right, mister. You're riding the wave. But time was when you were hanging on to a piece of driftwood that was getting soggier by the minute. You were afraid to let go and you didn't know how to swim. You were scared silly. Your idea of fighting back if you were a distributor was to cut back—retrench—make only low-budget tripe. Or, if you were an exhibitor, let the theatres go to hell or put on a drive to sell more popcorn to people who weren't there. 3-D? It'll lose us the few customers we've got, you said. CinemaScope? Who's got dough to put into new equipment? Let Skouras try it himself! Stereophonic sound—wide screen? All the pioneers are dead, except Hopalong Cassidy and he's competition on tv.

Yes Virginia, there were a lot of us like that.

The simple truth, I think, is that too many of us are too old and too tired and too afraid to gamble on new techniques until economic conditions force us to do so. Worse, we don't seem to have learned very much from hard experience.

A homily much abused by after-dinner speakers is the saying that new ideas and methods are the life-blood of our industry, that we owe our very existence to the development of revolutionary changes. I wonder how many of them believe it. I wonder how many of them practice what they preach.

The Old Vitamin Shots

Medicine has recorded no instance in which a transfusion has saved a corpse. So, the time for action is while we are still alive—a tonic now and then to make sure we never again become as sick as we were a while back. So far, we've been lucky . . . our pinch-hitters didn't walk off the field when we kept them on the bench for eight innings. Those of us with long memories will recall that it was only when the public tired of shorts that Adolph Zukor was able to get the support for his famous feature picture. We discovered Sam Warner's Vitaphone at the funeral of the "silents." Sheer desperation helped us decide that Spyros Syouras' CinemaScope was worth a trial. Always—with us—it's been the 11th hour reprieve from the governor . . . the U.S. cavalry charging in to save the last outpost from annihilation—we've gotten to believe our own scenarios.

Sure, we've made some wrong guesses. 3-D flopped. Maybe we weren't ready, maybe everybody was too eager for a fast buck. But look for 3-D to come back some day—without the specs—in a better form—a completely new concept that'll pay off at the ticket window. And who's to say it was a total loss? Nobody can deny that the depth boys came along at a time when the boxoffice looked sadder than an unpaid funeral director. Before you could say "Bwana Devil," the newspapers plunged into discussions about dimension, advertisers were using it to sell everything from brassieres to automobiles, tv headliners were building skits around it, and the public was jolted into the realization that in the neighborhood there were things called moviehouses.

All right, you say, what do you suggest?

First off, there is no monopoly on ideas; exhibitors, strangely enough, have 'em too. This may come as a surprise to some of our producers and their advertising staffs, whose mental image of the exhibitor seems to be one of a shabby, potbellied little man mopping up a men's room and then rushing off to bag the popcorn. And though it seems logical that the retailer should know best what type of merchandise his customers will buy, and in what ways it can best be sold, the average film mogul tackles trends through a high-priced polister and leaves his billion-dollar selling to the tender mercies of an ad agency exec whose sole contact with the movies may have been a Saturday night picture show once with a girl from Bryn Mawr.

Merchants in other lines of endeavor are careful to sell only those retailers whose showrooms are on a par with the goods sold. But Hollywood spends millions on its pictures, scenes are shot and reshot for perfection, and then what happens? Too often this Tiffany merchandise is displayed in a five-and-dime setting, and the damage being done to the industry daily, by word-of-mouth, is tragic.

Of what value is the biggest newspaper ad, the smartest tv commercial, if it only reminds the viewer at home of an insult by a theatre staffer, or a rest room that smells as though it had been designed by Chic Sale? Only when the exhibitor has learned to provide the proper atmosphere his projectors each month will his dollar buy a dollar's worth of advertising. And speaking of advertising, tv will then be of terrific value in securing business, for there is no greater advertising medium today.

Let's face it. Some theatres unquestionably are through, victims of a severe but purging progress, and in some quarters arises the cry that this is a plot by the filmmakers. These operators cannot understand that the cut in production is dictated purely by economics—that it is just no longer profitable to make the small, formula picture. The stark truth about these operations is that they have outlived their usefulness.

Lest somebody take offense, I'm not trying to be presumptious. Although I was brought up in the business, I'm still not old enough to join the Picture Pioneers. What I am trying to get across is that standing still is going backwards. The powers that be in our industry, in all phases, should be vitally concerned with ways and means of encouraging initiative, so that the enormous creative and organizing ability of this business will be channelled into a common path of finding new solutions to the problems we now face, and the even greater problems that are certain to confront us in the future.

Stereo Recording

Continued from page 3

tracks equal in fidelity the original in every respect."

Reeves reported that up to 56 different sound tracks were combined in the sound effects of "Cinerama Holiday," C'rama's second film, recently completed as the follow-up to "This Is Cinerama."

Touching on other points, the exec said he sees as a "very real possibility in the future" the use of portable installations to bring C'rama to the smaller American cities, as distinguished from its now limited play in large theatres in key towns. He also regards as a "possibility" showings of "This Is Cinerama" by the U. S. Government in capital cities abroad. It has been presented at International trade Fairs in Damascus and Bangkok.

CONGRESS AND SHOW BUSINESS

Film Imports in U.S.

Continued from page 27

had never envisioned the day when they would become really troublesome to Hollywood. On the other hand, it was equally remote that Hollywood would ever trouble them. Wholly unforseen has been the development of the past two years, by which the major U. S. film companies have been booking their products into the art houses heretofore given over to foreign-language pictures or to the oldies which have taken the long-term fancy of the aficiondos. The practice, when it first became evident, was deplored by some sections of the U. S. industry, but when M-G-M opened "Lili" at the 52d St. Trans Lux—and it showed signs of hanging on there—the dissidents took a second look and followed suit.

The U. S. industry, always quick on the uptake, has made innumerable playing time deals, both in New York and in the other key cities. Hence the housing drought recently afflicting the foreign film boys. In the face of that unlooked-for competition, they have found it increasingly tough to get playing time for anything but topnotch product.

Witch Hunt Atmosphere Percolates Down, Makes Locals 'Tough'

Censorship (State and police) is tightening, too. The reasons will probably interest the political historians. There is a fairly general belief that the investigatory mood that has settled upon the country has given the jitters, consciously or not, to a great many levels of officialdom. They're all trying a little harder—not so much to do their jobs better, but to leave themselves a bit more blameless when and if the Big Light should turn their way.

Things have become tougher even in fairly liberal N. Y. State. Censorship laws or not, there are always enough other laws around to suit the needs of the overzealous cop, or a local Purity League. They're all worth their weight in nuisance value, even if their complaints ultimately get thrown out of court.

But it is a fact that there remain many important areas across the country where the danger of censorship is not considerable. Hence, if a foreign film distributor feels he has a product containing a high level of censor-bait, he is likely to pick his spots carefully. He will usually open on the West Coast, where bluenosing is sporadic, and work his way Eastward, leap-frogging the more hazardous situations. By the time he gets to N. Y., he has muscles enough to take on a lot of censors and pay the substantial legal fees it takes to buck State censorship, if any.

Taking this long approach to N. Y., coming in through the back door, are "Sunderin," "One Summer of Happiness" and "Companions of the Night."

In the past two years, the lack of censorship criteria has become more glaringly evident than ever. While in a few places a foreign-language film has been given a bit more leeway—perhaps on the ground that the French, they are a funny race, and let's not fight it, boys—that tolerant view has actually been reversed on recent occasions. Thus, some dialog and situations in "The Moon Is Blue" and "A Woman's World" got a green light, though the same bits in a foreign picture would have had some of the same censors rolling their orbs upward and moaning in anguish. The material wouldn't have a prayer if it came from abroad.

Nor would the prestige once lent by a prize at Cannes, Venice or Edinburgh Film Festival cut any ice at all. If every entrant in every one of these festivals does not win some sort of prize, there is at least, an impression to the contrary, and these honors if such they be, are now virtually meaningless.

The hit N. Y.-via-back-door routine also has the advantage of deferring a possibly grim verdict by the N. Y. film critics. When a product has taken some profit out of the other cities, the critical reception in N. Y., if it's ungood, doesn't sting so much—and doesn't play such a damaging role in the terms obtainable by the distributor for further out-of-town engagements.

Importers Learn Out-of-Town Critics Not 'Easy' on Linguals

The New Idea of reversing movement—West to East, instead of vice-versa—is also undeceiving the distributors about a long-held fallacy. The N. Y. critics, they had always avowed, were the toughest. They are learning differently. The N. Y. reviewers, it now appears, are the ones who usually try to give the foreign film an even break, and sometimes better than that. The out-of-town reviewers, a bit frightened about this new medium, are pretty standoffish; anyway, they resolve few doubts in favor of the foreign film.

There has been a change, too, in the character of the foreign-language film audience. Where once it consisted quite largely of the "intellectuals," as well as those who simply were repelled by Hollywood and all its works and switched to foreign-language pictures as a protest, the foreign picture is now picking up a lot of traffic off the streets, too, so to speak. The Deep Thinkers and Trend Spotters offer an enchanting explanation. Hollywood, they say, has improved its product so much recently, it has created an audience perceptive enough to enjoy foreign pictures for the first time; in short, Hollywood has educated 'em up to the foreign film standard. But no one is sanguine enough to believe that this part of the audience has been wholly lost to the U. S. film industry.

But one theory is supportable—that foreign-language film distribution in the U. S. is mercurial, affected by a great many independent and apparently unrelated factors. If it isn't the state of the foreign money market, it's the mood of either the U. S. Customs or an old lady in Dubuque; if not the general level of Hollywood's product at a given time, it's the film subsidy plan in India. Oh, well, what're you gonna do?

Fight Due to Limit Antitrust Treble Damages—And for Export Tax Break

By HERMAN A. LOWE
(Chief, Variety Washington Bureau)

Washington.

A host of ready-made issues affecting motion pictures, radio, television and other facets of amusements, are left over from the Republican 83rd Congress . . . and ready for action by the new Democratic 84th.

Some involve legislation; some call for additional investigation with a possibility of bills to be offered. They cover the field from taxes and antitrust to juvenile delinquency, labor and international policy.

The film business, as usual, is up to its neck in wrestling matches with Congress, hoping that the lawmakers will do something about some matters and stay away from others.

First there is the antitrust situation. For the past few years, Hollywood has sought vainly to push through a law which would provide a uniform, nationwide statute of limitations for treble damage antitrust suits and also give the presiding Federal judge discretion to decide whether the monetary damages should be less than the new mandatory treble damage.

There have been hearings but the matter has never gotten to a vote in either chamber. This year, according to the inside word, the industry will push hard for a uniform statute, and do little about mandatory versus discretionary damages. The result is expected to be less opposition from the exhibitors.

The President's special commission on revision of the antitrust laws is expected, in its report filed this month or next, to recommend uniform limitation.

The major film distributors, hit with millions of dollars of litigation; have been seeking a three-year limitation while the exhibitors would naturally prefer a longer one. At present, Federal treble damage suits are subject to the limitation statutes of the states in which the actions are begun. This varies from two to 12 years in different states and results in litigants shopping for states with long statutes.

Export Allowance

Taxes will be up again in 1955, as in every year. But it will not be very important for motion pictures. Although there was considerable talk in COMPO about pushing for elimination of the remaining 10% admissions bite on tickets costing over 50c, this has now been dropped.

Another tax matter intrigues majors exporting film to the rest of the world. Sec. 923 provides a 20% tax credit on foreign earnings where U. S. capital investment is involved. Such a provision is in effect for South America, but not the remainder of the world. Idea is to broaden the provision to cover the entire free world, to encourage American private investment there. The Democratic Congress will probably be more favorable to the notion than were the Republicans.

The Allied States Assn. stirred up a teapot tempest during 1954 in threatening Government regulation of the prices charged by the film distributors. This caused a split among exhibitors, solid opposition from the distributors and producers, and warnings from members of Congress that the measure would be worse on exhibitors than the condition they sought to cure. While it is entirely possible to have a member of the House or Senate introduce the Allied bill, it apparently has no chance of passage.

Juvenile Delinquency

The Senate Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency never got to the point of looking into the motion picture industry as a possible source of "corrupting" minors, although it did look into television last year. There is a possibility that the committee will be reconstituted for another two years. If the money is provided, there will likely be more investigation into tv and a probe of motion pictures, as well.

Home-Toll Video

The prospectively "hot" issue of pay-as-you-see television is already before the Federal Communications Commission, with exhibitors lining up to block it. At the same time, there is talk that one or more Congressional committees may explore the matter. Rep. Carl Hinshaw, of California, introduced a bill permitting it, in 1953. Measure was given no attention. Several such bills are likely to be introduced this year, together with others which would seek to prevent subscription video.

The broadcasting industry expects the usual flurry of bills to bar liquor advertising. Six were introduced in the last Congress. Some are dropped in the hopper every session. Nothing has come of them, but they will continue to be offered.

Radio and television are interested in action to open sessions of Congress and all congressional hearings to broadcasting and telecasting. Bills to permit it and prohibit it were introduced in the last Congress. More of the same may be expected. Another group of bills, to be reintroduced, would strictly limit the use of television and radio where a witness appears before a Congressional Committee. There has been considerable question about the constitutionality.

Ever controversial is political broadcasting. Stations, which may not censure political broadcasts, worry about libel. They want to be made libel free by law. Rep. Joseph P. O'Hara, of Minnesota, introduced a bill to that effect in the last two Congresses. Such legislation will be offered again.

Senator Ed Johnson, who didn't run for reelection last November, pushed his own measure to permit minor league baseball clubs to bar broadcasting and telecasting from their territory. Bill won Commerce Committee approval, despite opposition by NARTB. It never came to a floor vote, being blocked consistently. It is unlikely to come up this year. Rep. Emanuel Celler, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee in this new Congress, was the author of legislation to make professional sports subject to the antitrust laws. He may introduce it again. It could open up broadcasting and telecasting of sports events, to a greater extent than ever.

For several years, Congress has sought a law which would bar the use of the wires and radio for gambling, without interfering with the legitimate broadcasts of major sports events. The bills made some progress last year, but didn't ge over the hurdle. It's try, try again in 1955.

One of the interesting tax bills, which didn't make the grade in 1954, was designed to encourage inclusion of UHF tuners in all tv sets. It would have provided a special excise tax cut for such receivers. It may be offered again.

Congress okayed creation of a Presidential Commission to study international television to benefit this nation. However, it failed to provide any money for the study. The funds will be sought again early this year.

Minimum Wage Proviso

The Eisenhower administration may seek to extend the Federal minimum wage law to retail and service establishments. This would cover employees of local theatres, and also employees of such entertainment as local carnivals, skating rinks, swimming pools, sports stadiums, etc. Retail groups will fight this hard. Motion picture production and distribution and broadcasting are already covered.

New Drive on Jukes

ASCAP is figured to try again to have the juke boxes placed under the copyright act, so that royalties may be charged for records played in the music machines. For years, this battle has waged on Capitol Hill. The legislation is introduced each session; hearings are held, and then the whole matter is pigeonholed. The Congress works on the simple theory that there are more operators of jukeboxes who vote than there are songwriters.

Most Senators and Representatives who have introduced bills for a national theatre in Washington have been reelected. They will reintroduce these bills, but with small chance of getting them approved.

The Practical Side Of Show Biz

Vet Publicist's Tongue-in-Cheek Formula For Surefire B.O.

By HOWARD DIETZ

After about 30 years of reflection and observation I have come to the conclusion that the public likes hits.

Any producer knows that the surefire course is to give the public what it wants. I predict that any company that consistently makes hits will be a success.

Howard Dietz

Now I suppose you will say that anyone could think of that. But the point is that anyone doesn't. I could give you example after example.

Another thing. Hits are usually bigger when the production cost is low. It stands to reason that the less it costs and the more it takes in, the bigger margin of profit.

The best kind of hit to make is one that is a hit in the domestic as well as overseas market. As America likes pictures laid in Paris, and as every other country likes pictures laid in Paris, is is obvious that you should lay your picture in Paris—that is, if you want this particular international kind of hit.

Pictures that have reissue value are also desirable. Give your hit picture a quality that is ever fresh. You can do this by guarding against giving your picture a quality that is ever stale.

The wise money producer will insure his picture if he bases it on a bestselling novel or smash play. However, since the cost of these novels and plays is often prohibitive, it is best to buy them before they are put on the market. This requires careful judgment as it must be made in advance. You'll win out if you only buy novels and plays that are destined to be bestsellers or hits. The trick is to get in on the ground floor.

I know a fellow who always makes it a point to get in on the ground floor. He is the janitor.

It might be a good idea to add this janitor to your staff. Give him a percentage deal.

As for promotion, etc. Remember to give your hit picture the atmosphere of success in all the ads in Life, Look, This Week, The American Weekly, the Rave. Don't give it an atmosphere of failure. Even a hit picture can suffer by that.

In the newspapers use quotes. Make pictures the critics will find easy to praise.

You may parry my argument by saying "What about Bosley Crowther?" and I can only answer that if it's Crowther you want the formula is simple. Make pictures that Crowther will like.

Ah, but then you might say "What does Crowther like?" The answer to that is to be found in Crowther's own admissions.

He likes pictures that are intelligent, well-produced, well-acted, well-directed from significant stories in beautiful color and Japanese.

Therefore, it might be wisest to have a story about a Japanese in Paris. You might call it "Mlle. Tokio" or "The Geisha Girl on the Champs Elysees."

I could go on this way as promotion is my special racket. In general, the best thing is to pattern your promotion after Samuel Goldwyn, who is in a class by himself. The teacher tried to put other pupils in his class but Sam wouldn't have it.

In patterning your promotion after the great Goldwyn, get a fellow who looks exactly like him and tell him to do exactly what Goldwyn does.

In fact, it is a good idea to train them to be like Goldwyn. Start them off in the glove business, have them invest in a picture company, then branch out on their own and produce things like "The Best Years Of Our Lives," etc.

A final word, intended for exhibitors. Always have a cash customer in every seat. Get the kind of people who will go out and talk about the picture. In some cases it is a good idea to tell them what to say.

In short, happy patrons filling every seat at well-promoted hit pictures spells success.

START THE NEW YEAR CELEBRA

A WEALTH OF PRODUCT FOR EVERY TYPE OF THEATRE! ASK YOUR BRANCH! CAPITALIZE ON M-G-M's NATIONWIDE PROMOTION!

"BAD DAY AT BLACK ROCK" *(January)*
(*CinemaScope—Color*) . starring Spencer Tracy . Robert Ryan . co-starring Anne Francis . Dean Jagger . Walter Brennan . John Ericson . Ernest Borgnine . Lee Marvin Russell Collins

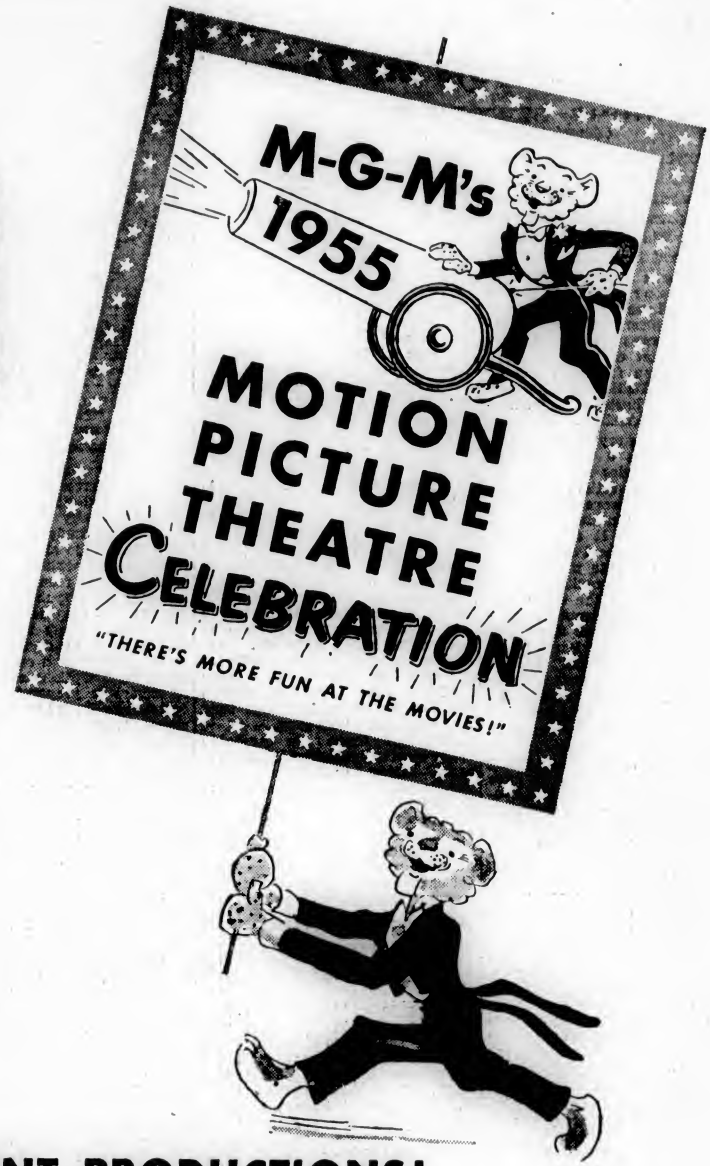
"GREEN FIRE" *(January)*
(*CinemaScope—Color*) . starring Stewart Granger . Grace Kelly . Paul Douglas . co-starring John Ericson . with Murvyn Vye

"MANY RIVERS TO CROSS" *(February)*
(*CinemaScope—Color*) . starring Robert Taylor . Eleanor Parker . with Victor McLaglen . Russ Tamblyn . Jeff Richards . James Arness

"JUPITER'S DARLING" *(February)*
(*CinemaScope—Color*) . starring Esther Williams . Howard Keel . Marge and Gower Champion . George Sanders with Richard Haydn . William Demarest

Throughout the nation M-G-M's happy box-office celebration is getting under way. Editorials in the trade press acclaim M-G-M's Salute to the theatres. Thank you, Mr. Editor! And thanks to the thousands of showmen who have expressed enthusiasm for M-G-M's Box-office Ballyhoo and who are launching their own local Celebration!

WITH A TION



"HIT THE DECK" *(March)*
(*CinemaScope—Color*) . starring Jane Powell . Tony Martin . Debbie Reynolds . Walter Pidgeon . Vic Damone . Gene Raymond . Ann Miller . Russ Tamblyn with Kay Armen . J. Carrol Naish . Richard Anderson Jane Darwell

"INTERRUPTED MELODY" *(March)*
(*CinemaScope—Color*) . starring Glenn Ford . Eleanor Parker . with Roger Moore . Cecil Kellaway

"THE GLASS SLIPPER" *(April)*
(*Color*) . starring Leslie Caron . Michael Wilding . with Keenan Wynn . Estelle Winwood . Elsa Lanchester Barry Jones

"BEDEVILLED" *(April)*
(*CinemaScope—Color*) . starring Anne Baxter . Steve Forrest . with Simone Renant . Maurice Teynac . Robert Christopher . Joseph Tomelty and Victor Francen

AND THESE CURRENT PRODUCTIONS!

"BETRAYED" (*Color*)
starring Clark Gable . Lana Turner . Victor Mature . co-starring Louis Calhern

"ROGUE COP"
starring Robert Taylor . Janet Leigh . George Raft . co-starring Steve Forrest . Anne Francis

"BRIGADOON" (*CinemaScope—Color*)
starring Gene Kelly . Van Johnson . Cyd Charisse . with Elaine Stewart . Barry Jones . Albert Sharpe

"ATHENA" (*Color*)
starring Jane Powell . Edmund Purdom . Debbie Reynolds . Vic Damone . Louis Calhern . with Linda Christian . Evelyn Varden Ray Collins

"BEAU BRUMMELL" (*Color*)
starring Stewart Granger . Elizabeth Taylor . Peter Ustinov . with Robert Morley

"THE LAST TIME I SAW PARIS" (*Technicolor*)
starring Elizabeth Taylor . Van Johnson . Walter Pidgeon . Donna Reed . with Eva Gabor . Kurt Kasznar

"CREST OF THE WAVE"
starring Gene Kelly . with John Justin . Bernard Lee . Jeff Richards

"DEEP IN MY HEART" (*Color*)
starring Jose Ferrer . Merle Oberon . Helen Traubel . and Guest Stars: Walter Pidgeon . Paul Henreid . Rosemary Clooney . Gene & Fred Kelly . Jane Powell . Vic Damone . Ann Miller . Cyd Charisse Howard Keel . Tony Martin . with Doe Avedon . Tamara Toumanova Paul Stewart . Isobel Elsom . William Olvis . James Mitchell

AND THESE BIG FUTURE M-G-M ATTRACTIONS COMING!

"MOONFLEET" (*CinemaScope—Color*)
starring Stewart Granger . George Sanders . Joan Greenwood . Viveca Lindfors . with Jon Whiteley . Melville Cooper

"IT'S ALWAYS FAIR WEATHER" (*CinemaScope—Color*)
starring Gene Kelly . Dan Dailey . Cyd Charisse . Dolores Gray Michael Kidd

"THE SCARLET COAT" (*CinemaScope—Color*)
starring Cornel Wilde . Michael Wilding . George Sanders . Anne Francis . with Robert Douglas . John McIntire . and Bobby Driscoll

"BLACKBOARD JUNGLE"
starring Glenn Ford . Anne Francis . Louis Calhern . Margaret Hayes

"THE KING'S THIEF" (*CinemaScope—Color*)
starring Ann Blyth . Edmund Purdom . David Niven . George Sanders with Roger Moore

"THE MARAUDERS" (*Color*)
starring Dan Duryea . Jeff Richards . Keenan Wynn . Jarma Lewis

"LOVE ME OR LEAVE ME" (*CinemaScope—Color*)
starring Doris Day . James Cagney . Cameron Mitchell . with Robert Keith . Tom Tully . Harry Bellaver

"THE PRODIGAL" (*CinemaScope—Color*)
starring Lana Turner . Edmund Purdom . Louis Calhern . with Audrey Dalton . James Mitchell . Neville Brand . Walter Hampden . Taina Elg Francis L. Sullivan . Joseph Wiseman . Sandra Descher

AND MANY MORE BIG ONES INCLUDING THE INDUSTRY'S GREATEST LINE-UP OF SHORT SUBJECTS!

No Matter the Year or Gear, Story Is Always the Thing

By HENRY KLINGER
(Associate Story Editor, 20th-Fox)

In a living room, in the office of a story department, or in a writer's workshop, inevitably there comes a pause which heralds the question: "What is the story trend in Hollywood these days?"

I have been in the business of exploring story markets for 25 years but I have yet to discover a significant pattern of story thinking which occurs during any particular segment of time, although there are some factors which do influence similarities of setting on the bedecked heels of a particularly costly production.

The life of a story editor in pretalkie days was a comparatively simple one. Movies really moved. The faster the action, the less likely audiences were to question the validity of motivations and characterizations. It seemed important only for the Pearl Whites of the era to dangle precariously from cliffs until rescued from mustached villains by the opportune arrival of cameo-featured, Arrow-collar heroes. But when the succulent echoes of John Barrymore's 127 kisses in "Don Juan" became audible to 1926 audiences, a revolution took place in story thinking.

Sound was here despite the dour observations of industry skeptics. One movie pioneer stated: "I don't think there will ever be talking pictures on a large scale. To have conversation would strain the eyesight and the sense of hearing at once, taking away the restfulness one gets from moving pictures alone." Another commented: "Sound will keep movie fans awake. They come in to relax and, maybe, catch a nap."

Came Plausibility

Sound brought a change in the story attitudes of film companies. Characters who spoke from the screen demanded a new dimension: plausibility. These were real people, not just black and white images. Stories and plays were uprooted and transplanted to become motionless motion pictures.

The changes continued. The industry moved into a story era of important titles. It became the editor's lot to evaluate stories in terms of their potential as books or plays. Best sellers commanded inflated prices. While it was relatively simple to pick attractive titles from the lists of the Sunday Times and Herald Tribune book sections, it was more important to gather up glints in authors' eyes, to predict which of the stories in work would turn out to be important, and to recommend their purchase long before they became objects of competitive interest.

In the wake of television and restrictions in foreign currency came a series of retrenchments which swung the story pendulum back to material permitting modest budgeting. The magazine story and novels of crime and violence took the place of spectacle and costume. Documentaries like "House On 92nd Street" and "Boomerang" were enthusiastically received. Several of the New Yorker shorts like "Jackpot," "Man On the Ledge," and "Mr. 888" became fine films.

Each of these Hollywood phases brought with it a receptiveness to a type of story which might have had a far more difficult time had it been submitted at any other period.

More recently, the advent of CinemaScope, brought still another turn in the efforts of story departments to fill their studio's needs. At first the expanse of the screen seemed admirably suited toward the presentation of spectacles on film. Somehow it appeared terribly important to fill every inch of the mammouth Roxy Theatre screen, from 51st Street to 50th Street, with movement and costume. For a brief period, the "little" story which depended on intimate human interest scenes basked unhappily in the shadow of Hollywood's story thinking, and again it was the prestige novel which was heavily favored.

Happily, the story tide has turned again. With CinemaScope firmly established in the consciousness of the entertainment world, story departments are again exploring the markets for the "good" story, no matter what the period or the source. Since such stories frequently become books which sell well, it is hardly surprising to find many of the best selling novels already sold to picture companies.

Through all of these story eras, Hollywood has remained the most lucrative of subsidiary markets in the sale of literary material, for the story has always provided both the foundation and catalytic agent for the huge spending process which makes for the full-length feature film.

Years ago the story was told of the man who took his trained bear to the local film theatre. The cashier at the boxoffice was reasonably startled at the request for two admission tickets. "I can't help it," the man explained, pointing to the bear. "He loved the book and he just insists on seeing the picture."

Today, the same cashier would probably arch her eyebrows at a less precarious angle when confronted with the same situation. Audiences are again returning to the boxoffice because they have read the book or, to mention a more recent vogue, because they have heard the title song.

Although there are probably fewer stories purchased by the separate major companies, Hollywood's total output has remained fairly constant. Independents have taken up the slack and the sources of filmable material are probed with continuing persistence. If these sources are not quite as fruitful as in the past, the fault is not entirely the result of a lessening in literary quality. Hollywood's standards have matured through the years and stories are evaluated more critically and frequently more discerningly.

No longer do story departments sit back and wait for material to come to them from the customary sources, from publishers, agents, editors. Nothing is more formidable or relentless than the sight of a story editor on the trail of an early chapter from an author's hot typewriter. Options and purchases of stories in preparation have become more frequent, and escalator clauses based on sales of the finished book have generally raised the price level on successful material.

Facetiously referred to as important clogs in the machine, the story editor continues to remain the custodian of the portals through which flows the literary and dramatic traffic to distinguish the overall superiority of Hollywood-made films....

BETTY GARDE
Currently
"TACEY" for
Universal-International

Even Statesmen Need Ghosts

Continued from page 3

and began speaking his profundities to the bird. Next day he returned the parrot. The pet-store owner asked: "Doesn't he repeat right?" "Yes, he repeats me verbatim, but I don't like his attitude. Soon as he ends repeating one of my speeches, he always finishes with: 'The opinions just expressed by Mr. Blivitz are entirely his own.'"

Gag-writers are also blessed, if not altogether absolved. Blessed, in that there has been much material written in the world before they started snooping around, for their ellents. But not always absolved, because of their not knowing the good from the bad in their filching. If you have to steal, why not grab the best stuff? It's just as easy. True, there are many star comedians who have creative ability, and do often show their genius by throwing the ghosted-scripts in the ashcan and depend on ad libbing their way through a program, even if that ad libbing also has been "ghosted."

Anything that brings zillions in cash cannot be termed a "vicious circle." It may appear a little lopsided at times, but that depends whether you're *within* the circle, or *out*. Sooner or later, comes the question: "If gag-writers can make fortunes for their 'parroting' stars, why not utilize the stuff themselves and become comedians instead?" What's the hitch? To begin with, how photogenic can a gag-writer be, after spending years in damp cellars of public-library research rooms, or in the basements of badly lighted, second-hand bookstores. Or eating late at night in Max's Stage Delicatessen to get earfuls, of his and others' quips. Or working with confederates in the Post Office, to get in advance those night club publicity releases, the elearing house of all "gag" collections.

Gag-writers are continually griping about the disproportionate revenues of comedian and gag-writers. When the "ghoster" hears his gag, quip or pun get a howl on television, his first reaction is that of "mission accomplished"—a bofferoo. Then to switch to deep gloom; "I only got little pay for a laugh that'll get him a 20-year contract—it ain't fair, even to the guy I stole the gag from."

To the public, it is just a "family scrap" and it doesn't know which is the breadwinner and which is the poor relation.

The amusement follower would never know there is such a thing as "ghost-writers" if comedians themselves didn't kid about these writers, with such cracks as "No use, I've got to get myself a new set of gag-writers" . . . "How did Red Buttons' guys get in with my boys?" . . . "I can't make a speech tonight, because I've loaned my writers to Senator Flanders."

Born To Blush Unseen

We again ask the question: Why doesn't the "feeder" of comedians feed his own mouth? Will tell you why. He hasn't faith enough in the material or immaterial unless uttered by a recognized personality. Did you ever sit in on a gag-writer's session, in conclave with the star? If the writer can be battered down by the fellow that he's writing for, what can be expect from the public that has to listen? You can always tell when a "gag-conference" is on by the sounds through the transom: "Stinks—lousy—sell that to radio—are you working in the 'underground' for Henny Youngman?"

Yet, why limit this all to the amusement world? How about the "ghosting" for statesmen and politicos running for office. They do not act under false pretenses. They show you, by the way they can't read the script, that it isn't their own material. That kind of honest dishonesty is heartening, even if it is an unconscious confession.

Which makes the professional gag-writer a little sore: "Why shouldn't amateur humorists pay for the material also?" Little do they know that many of these Government leaders do. It certainly isn't a thing you get on lend-lease. I do not mean that they actually pay cash for the jokes. They pay by inviting you to Washington—let you mix with the ultra, in the news—and at one of these soirees, you can't let them think you are just a schmo—so you make wisecracks at the party, that later come out in columns as said by "Senator So-and-So."

Then again, let's speak for the defense: What's the difference as to who steals from whom. If laughter is the result and it makes for a happier nation, then what are the odds? What difference does it make if a popular ballad songwriter cops from a classic. Why should that classic be comparatively unsung? We might as well say we should not use the heritage handed down to us, in our own being. True there are commercial heartbreaks in all these pilferings of humor. But the individual moan of the aggrieved cannot be heard in the laughter of the greater amount that heard it. Least of all caring is the high-financed comedian who knows he isn't mouthing his own material, but knows, however, that he is the most desired parrot they are catering to. The lesser ones don't get the jobs to pay these "ghosters." The gag-writer must then be content to be "king maker, rather than king"—always "the bridesmaid, but never the bride."

Occasionally you have the double-talent of writer-actor and when they are, they're usually tops in their profession. Why shouldn't they write better for themselves?

Our Rosy Daze

So the Cobwebs Didn't Cover the Swimming Pools, But Exhib-Distrib Relations Call For a Little More Common Sense

By ARTHUR L. MAYER

There is an adage that a prophet is without honor in his own country. I for one hope it is true because prophets are usually very unpleasant fellows predicting thoroughly unpleasant things particularly if they are writing about the motion picture industry.

Arthur L. Mayer

For example a few years ago Life, in a piece unredeemed by even crocodile tears, announced that "Looking ahead it's easy to see the decaying hulks of the studios standing empty in the misty sun, the props scattered and broken, the swimming pools overgrown with weeds, the great homes shuttered and stripped of every belonging in a series of desperate public auctions and here and there among the ruins the bleaching bones of some $4 000 a week executive, who incredulous to the last, died miserably of malnutrition of body and ego."

Time—not the other Luce publication but the old man with the sickle—had told quite a different story.

Today, our studios far from being deeaying hulks are humming with activity and our producers, with egos at least no more inflated than those of magazine editors, far from starving, are dining nightly at Chasen's and Romanoff's. Our pictures far from being discarded in favor of television programs are so superior as to defy comparison. The most spectacular of the "spectaculars" looks like something rushed out on Poverty Row contrasted with "White Christmas" or "A Star Is Born."

I see, however, little justification for the mood, particularly prevalent among our producers and distributors, of complacency and self-satisfaction. We have come through our greatest emergency with flying colors but little glory for most of us. Our salvation is primarily due to the courage of one indomitable and indefatigable man, Spyros Skouras, who when the air was so thick with defeatism that it looked like a California smog, staked his personal fortunes and the resources of his company on the public acceptance of the anamorphic processes. Pandora's famous box, packed full of trouble, however, had nothing on that mahogany console, which has converted what was once a man's castle into his private theatre for bad pictures. Any day now the living room wall—you know where the book shelves used to be—will be converted into a gigantic three-dimensional screen out of which ollobrigida, with everything life-size and in Eastman, as well as every man's favorite colors, will emerge and if you drop 50c extra in a slot will sit down in Papa's lap.

So what are we doing about it?

Living up to our best industry traditions by calling each other names and loudly yelling for the cops. Some exhibitors want Government regulation of film rentals to stop big bad wolves like "Honest Abe" Montague and "Benevolent Benny" Kalmenson. Of course they propose only a "little" Government interference but regulation is like pregnancy, it doesn't come, or rather stay, in small doses. Once you have it, or so I am told, it keeps on growing on you. But if some exhibitors have lost their heads, not to mention their shirts, some distributors have misplaced their hearts, and I for one am more revolted by the callous than by the callow. It is a la Hoyle in all other industries for the sales heads to take a paternal interest in the welfare and progress of their customers. But any of our distributors who indicated such a lamentable weakness would get the old heave-ho pronto. At times I think they are amazed at their moderation in not asking for 101% film rentals.

Everybody admits in conversation, if not in conferences, that arbitration is the panacea for our problems. Unfortunately, every proposal to inaugurate it meets so many objections that it seems at times as if we needed an arbitration board to arbitrate arbitration. My own personal experience with arbitration is limited. One day I advertised a coming attraction at the Rialto as the "worst film ever made." Opening day it broke the house record—everybody came to see how I could possibly play a worse picture than the major companies in their wisdom ordinarily made available to a little independent like myself. The distributor, however, was furious. He threatened to sue me for maliciously ruining his property, which was so bad that no one could ruin it. Eventually we arbitrated the case and the outcome was very unjust. The board found against me and fined me 1c. Ever since then I have been a confirmed advocate of arbitration.

Arbitration

And when I speak of arbitration I refer not only to frills but to fundamentals. If some guy behind a big walnut desk in a big walnut office with a walnut for a head thinks it perfectly fair to charge the Rex in Regina, grossing $500 weekly, a film rental of $250 why isn't he prepared to submit that rental to the judgment of three good men and true with no interest in the matter except fair play and to get home early for dinner.

And as long as I am well on the way to making myself as unpopular as a man with B.O.—and I don't mean Box Office—let me add a few words about producers. Never in all those happy years when I was known as the Merchant of Menace did I screen so many films devoted to eye-gouging, groin-kicking and other fine forms of mayhem—so many crooked cops and so many degenerate dames packing gats where they should be patted. I am not as learned as Walter Lippman, who without seeing pictures can glibly attribute to the movies responsibility for increased juvenile delinquency, but I do say that an excessive diet of the violent, the vicious and the vulgar is offensive to the family audiences which constitute the backbone of our business. That is, if we have backbone. This is not good picture making and not good citizenship.

I am a patient man but I am fed up with the after-dinner industry orators who proclaim the inevitable greatness of our future. It will be just as great as we make it, just as great as we are. If we can forget our personal animosities for a little time we can have industry unity for a long time. If we can be statesmen with an eye on the dollar of service instead of showmen with an incurable yen for a quick buck, we can have good public relations. If we can be a little less overbearing and a lot more forbearing we can at one and the same time be peaceful, prosperous and progressive.

DESIGN FOR LIVING-TOGETHER

By AL LICHTMAN
(Director of Distribution, 20th-Fox)

In 1855, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote a long poem about an Indian named Hiawatha. One of its verses went like this:

"All your strength is in your union.
All your danger is in discord;
Therefore be at peace henceforward,
And as brothers live together."

It is highly unlikely that the poet had the motion picture industry in mind when he wrote these lines, despite the fact that the picture business has found the noble redman a source of infinite inspiration ever since its inception. Yet, 100 years ago, the simple lines quoted above, had as much meaning as they originally did when men of good will first taught the precepts of fellowship.

Al Lichtman

A few weeks ago, I offered to aid in calling a joint meeting of all branches of our industry to attempt to settle differences which have been plaguing us off and on ever since a few fleeting shadows flickered across a film screen. This proposal was hailed in the trade press as the beginning of a great step forward, and treated as though it was a pronouncement as startling and new as the achievement of the first nuclear chain reaction.

The response to the suggestion, though personally highly gratifying, was somewhat shocking to me, since it showed how far we had strayed from logic and understanding through our internal bickerings.

What is so sensational about sitting down and settling our differences without bringing in the lawyers, the process servers and the courts? Isn't this the foundation of sensible democratic procedure? Today, there is a United Nations in which countries are attempting to settle differences by peaceful means, and with a million times more at stake.

We at 20th Century-Fox have always found the roundtable a more comfortable piece of furniture than the judge's bench or the chair in the witness box. You may remember a unity of purpose and action when, in 1950, we met in Chicago to combine our forces against a disastrous falling off at the boxoffice.

You may remember how we gathered this year to settle differences in regard to CinemaScope and its stereophonic sound process. These were not idle meetings. They brought results of profound meaning to the industry, and not the least of these was the sense of brotherhood between exhibition, distribution and production.

Fighting Common Enemy

When our backs were against the wall, we arrayed ourselves to fight the common enemy. Now that things are looking up for many of us, we find no enemies, so we look for sparring partners among our own kind. But these sparring sessions bear all the earmarks of grudge fights, and before we know it we may be in an all-out battle.

I think we can flex our muscles without hurting each other by doing the jobs we were meant to do.

Let production make the best pictures it knows how to make. Not ordinary film fare, but the kind which has brought a rebirth of audience interest in the past year. Let production and research continue to experiment so that we may always find our wares superior to anything any other medium may offer.

In this regard, let me say that the major studios are no longer making any kind of a story with any kind of a cast just for the sake of filling out a release schedule. They now realize that the only thing that can justify the making of a motion picture is an intelligent story with wide popular appeal. As I write this, four of the book properties 20th Century-Fox is to make next year are on the bestseller list and three of them are No. 2, 3 and 4 on the roster.

Let distribution inspire producers to greater efforts and find means to sell the product to the public so that all may benefit. Also let distribution be concerned with the welfare of its customers so that where one succeeds the other does also.

Let exhibition maintain the finest theatres and places of entertainment, so that the public will find it a pleasure to see motion pictures. Let it publicize and market its wares so that it receives the maximum benefit from the attraction.

Let all branches of our business work for the common goal and do it without destroying each other. Work in organizations such as COMPO.

When I think of COMPO and think of the accomplishment in the tax fight, it is living proof of what can be accomplished by this industry when we all unite and work together wholeheartedly. We will have differences, but we have the means to settle these differences amicably and successfully. There is no obstacle we cannot surmount if we work in unity, "and as brothers live together."

No Trouble

Continued from page 9

Tattoo," Tennessee Williams' controversial comedy-drama Broadway hit which he scripted for Daniel Mann to direct. As with "Sheba," which introduced Miss Booth, "The Rose Tattoo" launches internationally famous Italian star Anna Magnani on the American screen opposite Burt Lancaster.

With heads in the sand, the trouble-finders criticized story qualities. Certainly none of us deliberately ever had made a bad picture or knowingly bought a bad story. Therefore, the accusations must have been aimed at others—the "they" responsible for all ills. I, along with many other producers, could point to costly purchases of successful New York play properties, bestselling novels and important originals. "The Rainmaker" and Tennessee Williams' "Summer and Smoke" are Broadway hits I'm proud to own, while "Artists and Models," a comedy to star Martin & Lewis as comic strip creators next February, affords them a change of comedy pace from their current "3 Ring Circus." In stories I always have looked, first, for interesting situations and characters on the assumption that if I, after having produced 400-odd pictures, find them interesting, then perhaps the public will, too.

Salesmanship

Whenever the charge was made that Hollywood wasn't selling its pictures, I could take particular personal exception. I had sold pictures before producing them, first as a theatre manager and then as a press agent, and to me selling the product to the public was as important as making it. An industrial manufacturer would not think of making a new product without first planning its sale. A motion picture demands the same consideration.

In fairness to the major studios, it must be admitted that the independent producer was in a better position to plead innocent to charges that came in the wake of the late bad boxoffice. His effort is greater and he pays more attention to detail by concentrating on two or three pictures instead of 15 or 20. He is more careful in preparing a script and in how he uses talent because he has to make good in a competitive market. Therefore his product is likely to be better and smack less of the assembly line.

Forecasts are not my line. But I believe that Hollywood must continue to cater to the public's varied tastes to maintain the advantages already won by the diversified entertainment which, with the big screen, reawakened audience interest. We must continue to search far afield for the different, the unusual and the unique in story material and for freshness in the actors who are to bring the stories to life.

Television, while still a threat, is not the ogre it seemed to be at first. While earning a unique place for itself, it has failed, like many modern invention, to destroy other fields. Just as the camera failed to kill art, as the phonograph failed to destroy music, and as the radio failed to eliminate newspaper reading, television has not destroyed motion pictures. On the contrary, following the initial shock, it has come to be regarded as a challenge and a stimulant to better films as well as an excellent medium for advertising and exploiting theatre attractions.

Which brings us the jackpot question—What *was* the trouble with Hollywood? Judging by public acceptance of the new techniques and wide screens, could it have been that the industry neglected to make technological advances until tv forced its hand?

Whatever the cause, the fact remains we are rid of those trouble-with-Hollywood discussions, and that's good.

DAME SYBIL, CASSON SET FOR INDIA RECITAL TOUR

London.

Dame Sybil Thorndike and her husband, Sir Lewis Casson, who just completed a tour of Australia and New Zealand, are going to India in the New Year. They'll give a series of dramatic recitals consisting of excerpts from Shakespeare and other classical plays and selections from English poetry from the 16th century to the present time.

The tour, which has been arranged by the British Council, will begin in Bombay and will embrace Delhi, Madras and Calcutta.

Mex-Only Radio Station Owners Bill Launched

Mexico City.

Radio for the Mexicans only is the theme of a bill that has passed its first reading in the Federal congress. It demands amending the national radio law to allow only native-born Mexicans to own and manage radio stations.

The measure, presented by Congressman Juan Manuel Osorio Palacios, provides that all aliens who own or manage radio stations must liquidate their interests in favor of native Mexicans. Foreigners would be banned from direct or indirect radio station ownership or management.

Closed-Circuit Theatre Video, Promising When B.O. Was Poor, Crimped by Widescreen Upsurge

By HY HOLLINGER

Always a bridesmaid, but never a bride. That appears to be the status of theatre television as it enters its sixth year of operation. Unlike its more prosperous sister, home tv, the closed-circuit offshoot continues unsuccessfully to woo the bigtime. It has been on the verge of matrimony with success for many years, but the marriage vows have been swallowed in a maze of complications.

The basic factor behind the delay in the advancement of theatre tv is simple. There's no serious immediate need for it to bolster a sagging boxoffice. When it was first introduced, it was hailed as the salvation of the nation's theatres which, at that time, were in deep trouble. Free home tv was crimping the boxoffice and Hollywood was in a rut turning out assembly-line product.

Theatre tv was just about getting off the ground when the film industry became enmeshed in the biggest technical revolution since the introduction of sound. While not completely forgotten, theatre tv was sidetracked as both Hollywood and exhibitors devoted themselves to their basic ingredient—motion pictures. Theatres invested huge sums to equip for the projection of the "new era" films. There was little interest and much less coin for closed-circuit installations. Situations that had theatre tv units waited for events. Those without them felt no need for theatre tv as the new type pictures started to bring customers back to the cinemas.

Healthy B.O. Hurt

Theatre tv will presumably remain in this position as long as film biz remains even mildly prosperous. Should public apathy to motion pictures return, via conditioning to the new projection techniques, dissatisfaction with Hollywood product, or a renewed interest in home tv with the introduction of color, theatre closed-circuit video may again face golden opportunity.

The most significant development of 1954 was the replacement of theatres by hotels as the principal outlets for closed-circuit commercial meetings.

Judged by the number and type of business corporations that have used closed-circuit during 1954, plus the repeat business developed, it's obvious that the medium has won acceptance as a quick, efficient manner to apprise salesmen, branches, or dealers of sales policies and other activities of company operation. It's also been found excellent as a means to hold symposiums on medical subjects for the nation's physicians.

Commercial Users

The companies that employed closed-circuit during the past year reads like a who's who of American business. They include General Motors, Ford, Dodge, Chrysler, Sealtest Division of National Dairy Products, Frankfort Distillers Corp., Kaiser-Willys, International Business Machines, Smith, Kline & French Laboratories, Wyeth Laboratories, Johnson's Wax, International Business Machines, American Management Assn., Pan American Airways, and Dow Chemical Co. The majority went to hotels, one employed the facilities of a network's tv studios, and several used theatres. In addition, there were combinations of hotels, theatres, and/or tv studios.

B'way Plays—Maybe

Talk of presenting Broadway shows via theatre tv continued during the year, but it remained just that—talk. BOTV claims to have made agreements with all the unions involved for the presentation of a legit show and hopes that the surmounting of this obstacle will bring nearer the day when Broadway shows can be offered the nation by theatre video.

The number of theatres having closed-circuit installations remains at about 100, give or take a few.

The manufacturers of equipment—General Precision and RCA—have developed large-screen color sets, but haven't moved into production since there's no call as yet for the equipment. Twentieth-Fox, because of its interest in the large-screen Eidophor unit, is keeping a watchful eye on developments in the closed-circuit field.

Line facilities provided by the American Telephone & Telegraph Co. is still a problem, but there was a general improvement in the situation in 1954 as the AT&T built more cables for various tv purposes.

Make 'Em Fewer But Better

Since Only Top Pix Do Biz That's the Prime Answer To 'Shortage' of Product

By ABE MONTAGUE
(Columbia Sales Veepee)

The answer to why there is a product shortage is "obvious," according to Columbia's sales chief, Abe Montague. "The exhibitor and distributor alike." Montague points out, "do very poorly with anything that is not a boxoffice picture." Consequently, he stresses, Col and other companies are doing everything possible to make pictures "that will gain wider public acceptance, not less."

To make a boxoffice picture, he notes, takes more preparation and production time than it does for "just another" film. He feels that turning out "just another" picture seems to lose money for all concerned. He says Col is trying to do everything possible to produce boxoffice attractions.

Takes Longer

"We seem to be accomplishing that," he declares, "but in making better pictures for better boxoffice, I again emphasize, it takes a great deal longer, a great deal more talent—and more money."

He maintains that the new independent producer-distributors have a definite place in the industry if they can add good pictures to the market. "If they are to produce just more film for the gristmill," he warns, "I don't think they will be helping themselves or the industry in general."

Assuring the industry that it's not Col's intention to turn out less pictures during 1955, Montague says that Columbia would like to hike its program if it's possible. "The more top pictures we can produce and distribute," he notes, "the less our overhead will be, both in production and distribution. And the more top pictures we can produce, the better it is for the exhibitor who plays them."

Need Incentive

The current complaints, according to Montague, are not new, and he says he doesn't remember a time when there weren't differences of opinion between buyer and seller. He feels exhibs must realize that Hollywood producers must be constantly encouraged "so they will have the enthusiasm and the desire to make the tremendous investments for worthwhile pictures." It's only natural, he asserts, in the film biz as in any other biz for the investor to do everything possible to recoup his coin outlay and make a normal profit.

Concern with film rentals, the Col sales topper feels, has resulted in a neglect of showmanship. "And when showmanship dies, enthusiasm in our great industry will lessen and, consequently, the industry will suffer."

In concluding his remarks on the product shortage, Montague states: "Better boxoffice can only be established by great pictures—and the exhibitor effort in exploiting those pictures. There is no shot-in-the-arm that I can think of that will bring about perfect accord in our industry. Maybe if there was less speechmaking and more promotional effort behind the greatest form of entertainment known to man—the motion picture—all our troubles will be greatly alleviated."

PINEWOOD RANK PROD. GOES 100% V'VISION

London.

As of last Tuesday (28), when studios resume after the Christmas vacation, the entire Rank production scheduled at Pinewood switches to VistaVision starting with "Value for Money" to be directed by Ken Annakin. In Eastman color, it features John Gregson, Susan Stephen and Diana Dors.

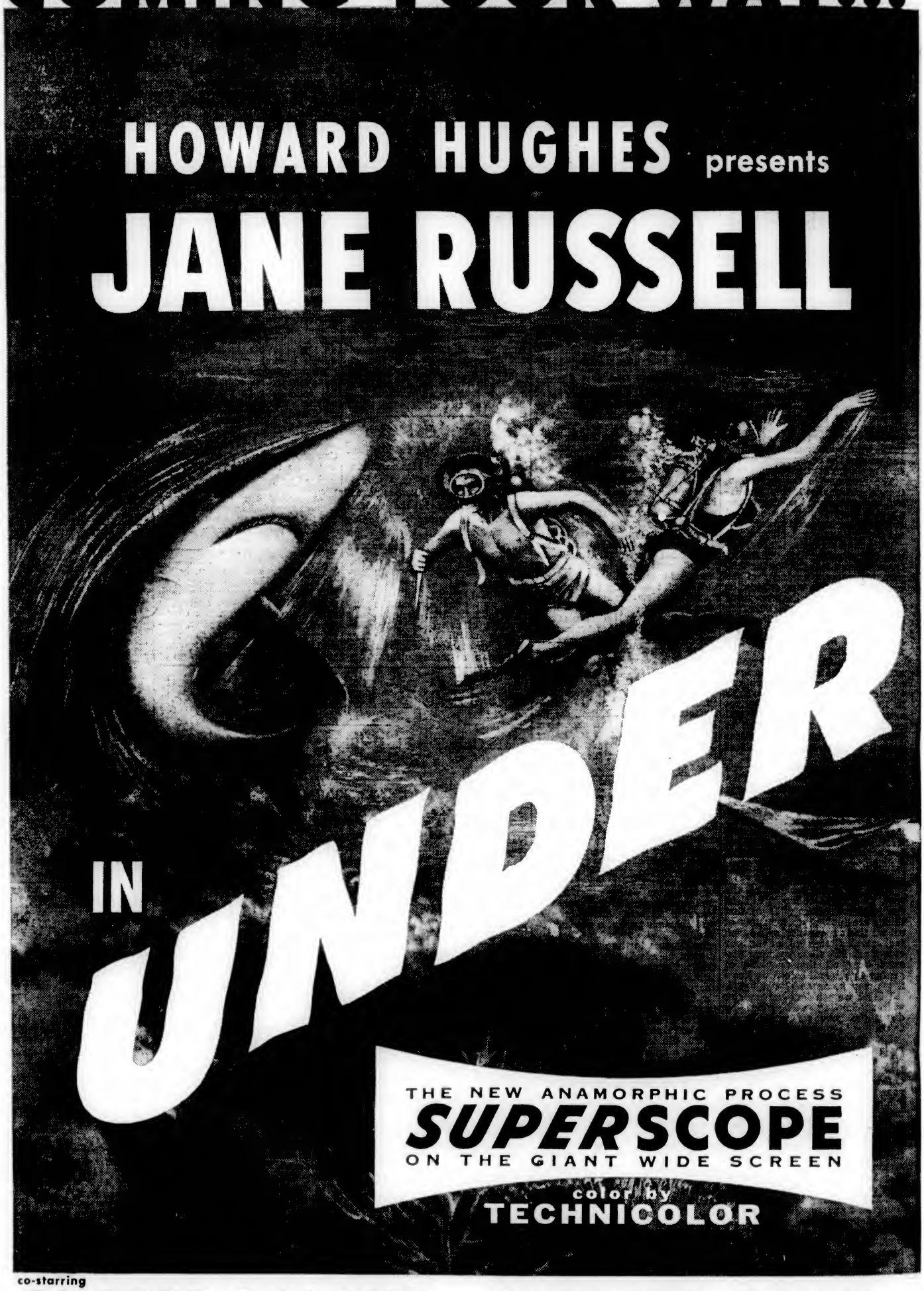
The 1955 schedule includes a sequel to "Doctor in the House" entitled "Doctor at Sea," with Dirk Bogarde starred; a new Norman Wisdom comedy, "His Lordship," to be directed by John Paddy Carstairs; "Alligator Named Daisy," to be produced by Raymond Stross; "Windom's Way"; "A Town Like Alice," based on Nevil Shute's novel; A. J. Cronin's "The Spanish Gardener," "All for Mary," an adaptation of a current legit hit; and "The Life of George Wilson."

The Ealing Studios, whose output is released through the Rank Organization, is also switching to VistaVision and its schedule includes a Jack Hawkins comedy-drama, "Touch and Go," scripted by William Rose who wrote the screenplay of "The Ladykillers," which is also on the studio program.

COMING YOUR WAY...

HOWARD HUGHES presents

JANE RUSSELL



IN UNDER

THE NEW ANAMORPHIC PROCESS
SUPERSCOPE
ON THE GIANT WIDE SCREEN
color by
TECHNICOLOR

co-starring

GILBERT ROLAND · RICHARD EGAN ·

IN EARLY FEBRUARY!
Skin Diver Action...
Aqua-lung Thrills!
in that new, exciting Underwater World
...with Jane Russell as you've never
seen her before! It took 3 years
to make...cost $3,000,000!
WATER!
RKO RADIO PICTURES
LORI NELSON · Directed by JOHN STURGES · Screenplay by WALTER NEWMAN · Produced by HARRY TATELMAN

A NOSE BY ANY OTHER . . .

By BURNET HERSHEY

"To whom can these people turn but to we who are more fortunate—who are blessed with good health? . . ."

Loretta was making a very grammatical appeal. She was one of those literate actresses who also wrote articles for the Woman's Home Companion.

She paused a moment to mop her beautiful brow. The television cameras had been putting the heat on her. Loretta had already emceed seven hours of the Multiple Sclerosis Telethon.

"Please, send in your contributions, whatever money you can afford . . ."

In the stage wing, Loretta's husband and manager, Luther Bancroft, watched, all scrutiny and all motion. As Loretta climaxed her fund-raising plea, he came on stage pushing a wheelchair in which sat an attractive, blonde girl.

"Young people—like Alice, here," Loretta said—"we've got to give them another chance at life—a much better chance."

Later, everyone agreed that Loretta Bancroft had given one of the finest performances of her career. The audience had responded with huge sums of mony to support research in crippling multiple sclerosis. Later, everyone also agreed Loretta never looked younger nor lovelier. After all, she did have a teen-age daughter.

Diane Bancroft was in finishing school the night of the big telethon. Thank goodness for "educational tv," as girls jokingly labeled the variety programs, she was able to watch her mother on the school set, surrounded by cheering chums. Even Ruth McIvar, Dean of McIvar Hall, was sitting by for the show.

It was hard to say whether Dean McIvar had her eyes so much on the tv screen as she did on Diane. Why does it happen so often, she thought to herself, that the children of celebrities are so unhappy, such lost and miserable creatures?

In the 20 years she had run her own school, nothing like "Diane's rebellion" had ever occurred. Other things had happened at McIvar Hall—cribbing, homesickness, sneaking out to see boys, even an out-and-out riot once. But this Diane! The youngster had actually said she would *not* go home for the Easter holidays!

"Mother looks *so* beautiful," Diane said worshipfully, as she watched her mother on the screen. The girls cast meaningful glances at each other. It was no secret that Diane believed her Mom was the most beautiful actress in Hollywood.

Dean McIvar thought what a pity it was that Diane did not inherit her mother's best feature—the chiseled, expressive, small nose. She studied Diane's profile and considered the merits of her silent witticism: Diane had a couple of extra curves and bumps in the wrong places.

"Well, young ladies," Dean McIvar said, "let's not overdo this tv, or this will be a school for classes with glasses." Dean McIvar liked to rhyme words and be friendly whenever she was about to issue a command or cut off some pleasure.

"Don't forget," she said, "you've all got packing to do for that trip home."

That was the big action-getter. The girls began to talk excitedly about their vacation plans. There was no more interest in telethon entertainment, in Loretta Bancroft, or Bing Crosby or George Gobel. The girls scattered back to their rooms. Diane remained, toying with the dials of the tv set.

"What are we going to do about Diane?" Dean McIvar said to her assistant, Katy Sommers, as the two sat in the Dean's office. "I can't get a word out of her. She refuses to pack. She says she's not going home for Easter!"

Dean McIvar had always envied Katy her ability to win the girls' confidences. Now she wondered if Katy were holding back something she knew.

"Haven't you noticed how miserable Diane's been?" Dean McIvar egged her on.

"Why, yes, madame professor," Katy said, addressing her in an old affectionate way, "I have. And if you would open you myopic blue eyes a bit wider, you'd see it was as plain as the nose on *her* face."

Dean McIvar stared at Katy in frank admiration. "Katy," she exclaimed, "do you really think that's it?" But suddenly everything seemed quite obvious to Dean McIvar, and she knew that must be it. Diane was developing a galloping neurosis called the "I'm too ugly to live" neurosis, very common among teenagers who wore glasses, or had bad teeth, or had big noses. Diane had a big nose, yes.

Dean McIvar recalled a dozen little things Diane did during the last term, all adding up to Katy's diagnosis—"plain as the nose on her face." Diane had forbidden any of her classmates to take her picture. Then there was the practiced habit of always standing full-faced and chin uptilted when she spoke to you, never in profile, even if it took considerable maneuvering for her. Just before the dance last week, she had noticed Diane standing in front of the hall mirror, pushing with a finger at the tip of her nose, forcing it back into the shape she yearned for. For that furtive instant, Diane was, in fact, a beautiful girl.

"You know, Katy," Dean McIvar said, breaking her reverie, "I think I've got a little job to do back in that tv room."

It seemed like hours while Dean McIvar talked to an inconsolable little girl. Over and over Diane repeated and sobbed that she was sure her parents were not her parents at all . . . that she didn't look like her mother, and she didn't look like her dad, either . . . and it must be that they just never told her she was really an orphan, an adopted child . . . and her mother and father didn't want her home, anyway, if they *were* her mother and father, or else why would they send her away to school and to camps and to relatives?

"But darling, Diane," Dean McIvar said, "your mother and father want to give you the best because they love you. Look, Diane, they're good, kind people. Look how much they do to help others."

"They don't *love* me . . . They love everybody *but* me."

"And that's why they send you to the best schools, and see that you have fun at camp, and even travel a bit and see relatives who love you, too."

"Oh, I can't stand it, Dean McIvar," Diane wailed. "I'm a foundling, that's what I am."

"But maybe you look like your grandmother, or great-grandmother, Diane, honey. Lots of us don't look like our parents."

"I don't look like *anyone*," Diane said. "Just look at Mother, look at her there, close, look close, real close, at that screen!"

Dean McIvar knew she would have to scout a third handkerchief unless she thought of something fast.

"Well, dear, if you really don't want to go home," Dean McIvar said hesitatingly, "how would you like to spend your Easter holiday with me—in New York?"

Slowly there was an astonished, hopeful face on Diane as Dean McIvar unfolded the prospect of the holiday adventure.

Late that evening Dean McIvar disclosed her idea to Katy Sommers.

"When I get to New York, I'll take her to Dr. Hewitt."

"Hewitt? Hewitt?" Katy said. "Do I know this doctor? Is he a psychiatrist?"

"No, my dear. Well, perhaps, in a way. He's patched up a lot of emotional wrecks. He's the greatest plastic surgeon in New York."

* * * *

In the offices of Dr. Gerald B. Hewitt, Diane and Dean McIvar must have been expected, for they were ushered immediately into the doctor's private chambers.

After the routine medical questions, Dr. Hewitt approached the now slightly-terrified Diane. Cupping her face in his hands, he tilted it gently upwards so the bright lights shone full upon her features.

"Relax, Diane," Dr. Hewitt said easily. "You have a fine skin—just fine."

He pushed upwards at the tip of her nose, almost as she herself had done before the mirror in the school hall. Again the magical result was achieved. Diane looked beautiful.

"Why this is perfect," he said. "It's going to be a pleasure to work with you, young lady."

"But, doctor," Diane broke in, looking more assured, "do you think I really ought to go through with such an operation? I don't know what my—my mother would say."

"To say nothing about your father, who will pay for this," Dean McIvar said, laughing goodnaturedly.

"Of course, Diane," Dr. Hewitt said, "this is all up to you. But somehow I can't help seeing you with a nose like Lana Turner's or Elizabeth Taylor's, or Loretta Bancroft's?"

Diane half-giggled and became all eagerness. "ou mean I really could have a nose like—like Loretta Bancroft's?"

The three were interrupted by Dr. Hewitt's nurse who had entered and whispered something to the doctor.

"If you'll excuse us, Diane, Dean McIvar and I have something to discuss in the outer office. Meanwhile, here's a scrapbook which may interest you. Ordinarily, I don't show it. It's sort of—well, very confidential. But I guess I'll let you see it. There are no names, just faces—before and after faces—a sort of catalog of the work we do here."

Diane was already deep in the scrapbook when the doctor and Dean McIvar departed.

Outside, Dr. Hewitt greeted the lovely Loretta Bancroft, whose face and voice were known to millions of adoring fans. Few knew her in the role of Diane's mother.

"Will she go through with it?" Loretta Bancroft asked anxiously.

"I think so," Dr. Hewitt said solemnly, "if you decide to tell her the truth about her mother, the whole truth. After all, there comes a time when a child must know."

Loretta Bancroft turned to Dean McIvar. "Thanks so much," she said in a broken voice, "for calling me, for explaining, for arranging all this. You've been very wonderful."

Dean McIvar and Dr. Hewitt watched as Loretta walked determinedly to the door and opened it.

Diane was sitting with her head bent over the book, completely absorbed. She was beginning to cry, but she had a smile on her face.

"Mother!" she screamed, as she looked up. Then she looked back at the page in the book which had so stunned her and she began to laugh.

Loretta Bancroft's laugh joined in echo as they both looked at the photo and laughed together.

"Of course, darling," she said. "I had mine fixed for my screen test . . . you were only a baby then. You *couldn't* have remembered."

A Jolson and a Cantor Story

By EDDIE DAVIS

Many years back I wrote the last Al Jolson musical for Broadway, "Hold On to Your Hats." Each Friday I would go to my mother's home for dinner and before I left I would hand my momma a check. Everything was going along smoothly until Jolson became ill and the show closed. Friday came around and I went to momma's for the usual dinner. After I finished eating I started to leave and I was reminded that I forgot the check. I told her that I was unable to give her a check as Al Jolson, the star of the show, had gotten sick and the show had to close. My mother, naturally concerned about my welfare, asked what was going to happen now. I told her I was going to write another musical for Broadway. My mother counseled, "Good, good, but *this* time write for *healthy* actors!"

I've lived with asthma for most of my lifetime, and we're none too happy together, but you know how tight the divorce laws are in New York.

I recall when I was completing my first season with Eddie Cantor in Hollywood back in the early '30s. Suddenly I was hit with an attack of asthma and had to enter Cedars of Lebanon Hospital. Cantor, whose only experience in hospitals at the time, was limited to visiting the maternity ward, came to see me and said, "Don't worry about a thing, Eddie. I have a wonderful specialist. I have arranged for him to see you. And I also told him to send the bill to me."

Cantor's physician arrived and after a thorough examination laid down the law. "Cut out starches, sweets and smoke one cigar a day." These were his terse instructions. "And when you check out of this hospital come and see me in my office."

A week later, bedraggled and worn and my face a chlorophyll green, I went to see the doctor. "Good grief!" he exclaimed, "What happened?" "You and your lousy instructions," I moaned. "I cut out the starches and I cut out the sweets, but that one cigar a day damn near killed me. You see, doc, I never smoked before in all my life!"

The Seven Lean Years Are Over

By ELLIS ARNALL

(Pres., Society of Independent Motion Picture Producers)

There has never been anything wrong with the motion picture industry that could not be cured by producing good pictures. The year 1954 has proved, once again, that the disorder affecting the industry was almost wholly of psychosomatic origin. It was a case of jitters, and not anything more serious.

Ellis Arnall

Looking at the statistics on increased attendance, it is hard to believe that the producers, distributors and exhibitors of this country were taking their pulses constantly a little more than a year ago.

There will be those who want to attribute the recovery to one or another remedy. Actually, the increased theatre attendance means only one thing: the pictures are better, more entertaining.

Much of this is due to the increased activity of independent producers. Theatre attendance reached an all-time high in this country in 1946, and then began to slip. If you set up a graph, you could see that the decline in independent production in the next seven years almost precisely paralleled the decline in attendance and the drop in boxoffice receipts.

The seven lean years for the industry might not have been due to the drop in independent operations; this may have been a symptom of the illness and not a cause. Personally, I think it was a symptom and that the cause was simple jitters.

The stimulation from new technical discoveries has helped the motion picture industry. It has been a mild, but extremely useful, tonic. It has pepped up the thinking of writers and directors and players. It has improved the morale and imaginations of producers. It has encouraged exhibitors. But it has not been the reason that the jitters has been cured.

The simple truth about the matter is that the jitters can not be cured; you just get over the condition.

Sometime in 1953, the motion picture industry began to make better motion pictures. When this product reached the theatres, the public started lining up at the boxoffice again.

It may be coincidence, and nothing more, that there was an increase in independent activity at this same time. In the space of a few months more than forty independent producers were added to the list of film makers. Many of the big successes of 1954, both in artistic merit and boxoffice appeal, came from independents.

Upcoming 1955 will be a great year for the independent producers, and it will be a great year for the motion picture industry.

There will be better pictures.

There will be better attendance at the theatres.

The independent producers will produce more pictures.

There will be better profits for producers, distributors and exhibitors.

Merchandising of Dreams

Many will attribute the improved condition of the motion picture industry to technological improvements in film making. Some will attribute the improvement to a decline in pulling power of other story-telling media. Some will shake their heads, observing that the public is wholly unpredictable.

New techniques have been valuable; there are some stories that can not be told effectively in short-story length, so novels are written; there are some dreams that can be translated to the screen best through the wide-lens cameras. But many highly successful productions released in 1954 were not indebted to the new techniques, and not all the productions using the newest developments were as successful as their producers had hoped. The answer lay somewhere else.

Nor is it entirely correct to say that the public's reaction is entirely unpredictable. There is this other truth: the people will go to see what they like.

Every drop in motion picture attendance that is not directly statistically attributable to a general decline in spending power can be due only to one cause: there has been a failure to produce the kind of motion pictures that the people want to see.

Now the business of the motion picture industry is the merchandising of dreams. This is not precisely the same thing as merchandising automobiles, dentifrices, eggs or kitchenware. The idea that a motion picture could be marketed by the number of feet of film ended with the era of General Films.

There are certain tangible, practical, almost physical difficulties about getting a dream on film. Many of these difficulties present challenges to the imagination; many more are challenges only to ingenuity. Very few motion pictures fail because of technical ineptitude. The competence and the ingenuity of the men and women who deal with the technical aspects of production is bewilderingly complete. Motion pictures that fail do so because they have nothing to say, because they have no dream to translate to the screen, because the shadows on the screen lack inner reality and never come to life in the brain and heart of the audience.

That is why the role of the independent producer is so important to the entire industry. The independent usually has a story to tell. He is relatively free to adapt his techniques to the needs of the story. He can spend more time in preliminaries before he goes into production. While he lacks some of the facilities for technological research, he is more free to experiment in other ways. His product, when it eventually is translated from story to script to film, bears the identifying characteristics of his own originality, character and perception. He is the innovator and the adapter.

Whether there will be seven fat years to be enjoyed in the future depends upon the continuation of the vitality that has been evidenced during the past year. It depends upon whether the industry has relearned the obvious lesson that good motion pictures, bringing originality and freshness and validity to the screens of the country, are the solutions to the problems.

There is good reason to think the lesson has been learned. The jitters are over. For a while, anyway, everybody is going to be happy.

Count Your Blessings—Mr. Exhibitor!

By HENRY KING

Hollwood.

I don't know whom Irving Berlin had in mind when he wrote his new "Count Your Blessings," but if no one actually motivated such a timely and philosophic psalm, I have a candidate—The American exhibitor.

Henry King

For years I wondered why politicos dreaded campaigning among the so-called grassroots. Now I know. Last week I returned from a criss-cross-country trek during which I undertook to buttonhole many exhibitors right in their own theatre lobbies. If that's puise-taking, my diagnosis shows their pulse, in the main, to be erratic.

For approximately six months now the ears of all Hollywood—or at least that element of Hollywood concerned with the production of motion pictures—have been assailed by exhibitor accusations of having created "an artificial product shortage." Between this assault on the ears and Los Angeles' smog smarting the eyes, Hollywood is now reduced to only three of its five senses.

So—late in the fall, in hedge-hopping into and out of 37 assorted hamlets and cities, I talked with no fewer than 86 assorted exhibitors. I had made the trip to weave in a few kind words, if I could, about a film called "Untamed," which stars Susan Hayward, and which 20th-Fox soon will spread across the nation's screens in all its Cinema-Scopic glory. Me? I had the pleasure of directing the opus. My journey basically was my own idea, to resolve some conclusions and, as aforesaid, to puise-take those exhibitors to learn if I could what makes them tick.

I cannot claim I learned what makes them tick, but I learned a lot of things.

First off, although Spyros Skouras, Darryl Zanuck, and Al Lichtman have spelled out for the exhibitors the meaning and necessity of the CinemaScope "Revolution" so many times even some of the African bushmen used on "Untamed" location in the Darkest (?) Continent understood it, I actually found many American exhibitors living in the pre-teevee era. Yes. Even in such cities as Nashville and Washington, D.C.

These exhibitors had not yet realized that the advent and impact of television had greatly changed the concept of picture-making; that breadth and grandeur and story themes—to which video has not yet graduated—must be employed in this Year of Grace (and CinemaScope!) to keep that necessary jump ahead of any possible sort of free entertainment tubed into the living rooms of the millions of American homes.

Consequently, these same exhibitors have not understood that (1) it has taken time to prefect the technical changes and (2) that in making far better and more lavish spectacles than television can conjure up, Hollywood no longer is imitating Detroit's assembly lines. Today, a film is custom-tailored, and the exhibitor should sell the product as such. When he sells a 1955 release with 1935 imagination and marketing methods, he is bound to get 1935 results at the box office. Yet, on my Lazy Q around the country, I found almost as many theatre owners merchandizing their films precisely as they or their predecessors did 20, 30 years ago as I found exhibitors operating on an Atomic Age level.

Custom-made, quality goods wear more durably than those churned out in standardized factory form. Surely exhibitors can realize this and get more mileage out of today's top product. Without compunction, and certainly with justification, just about every theatre in the land has raised its admission scales in the last several years. That's quite proper, for isn't the quality of entertainment being offered demonstrably upgraded from that purveyed back the years? I found no exhibitor who would quibble on that point.

What I did find was many a theatreman in the subsequent-run bracket to whom it had never occurred to vary from the twice-weekly change of bills he had been practicing for lo! these 30 years. He had fought buying CinemaScope (oh, very well—or any other) modern widescreen or stereophonic equipment. But he had modernized his popcorn-selling apparatus in the lobby four times since VJ Day. Why? Because, as he put it, he "had to keep up with the march of progress." Nobody was going to have a more modern soft-drink dispensing stand than he, no sir! But what he really had to sell, and all he really had to sell that set off his business from any corner candy store, was being sold—up there on the screen—just as he had been selling it since sound pictures came in.

The production end of the film industry employs as many time-saving devices and, today, as finely hones its operations as any other industry. Never did the production dollar count more; nor, for that matter, never did the production dollar go further when all values obtained are computed. Therefore, when it takes four months—from flagfail to finish as they say in Santa Anita circles—for a film like "Untamed" to reach the can, it must be realized by the exhibitor it is no Griffith Park quickie and should not be sold as such to the public.

Probably the most ridiculous charge ever hurled at Hollywood by the exhibition wing of this business is that of "deliberately" inducing a product shortage. Obviously, it would be easy to flood the exhibitor with slipshod screen fodder and let him sink into the morass of public indifference right along with it. What hurts most is the realization so many exhibitors do not actually understand that Hollywood, in up-pointing the quality and appeal of its output, is keeping that video wolf away from the theatres' doors and also keeping the exhibitor in business. It takes longer to make 'em now, more money is spent on 'em now, casts are bigger now—so won't the theatre owner do a little bit more now to help save this whole industry?

There used to be a word always dancing on the lip of every exhibitor—showmanship. They always smiled when they spoke the word, a proud word with many facets which dazzled like the many facets of a precious stone when held up to the light. Only occasionally now, it seems to me, do I hear an exhibitor talk of showmanship, and then all too frequently the word is spoken in a hollow tone, not with the snap and confidence with which it used to be so cleverly enunciated.

Here's the chance for showmanship, a challenge any real showman of the old school—and there are plenty left; there must be—would leap to meet. The challenge is to sell to the hilt, to squeeze the most out of quality entertainment and to out-think, out-stunt, out-draw and out-gross the opposition.

The real showman never relied on excuses nor acrimony and he would certainly confer the degree of **summe cum nauseam** on the original author of that thesis on "artificial and deliberate product shortage." The real showman always prided himself on getting the longest possible run out of any show he presented. He never arbitrarily set the limits on the run of any show before he even opened it any more than he set specified limits on the amount of showmanship he exerted in selling it. If he had a fair show he milked it of its whole potential; off a good show he waxed fat; off a great show he retired.

In looking over the crop of pictures Hollywood is sending out into release in 1955, along with those now in release, I think it possible a number of exhibitor showmen can retire this year—if they really work at it.

'Luther' Scot Xmas Draw

Glasgow.

"Martin Luther" is drawing good biz unexpectedly as a Christmas and New Year pic at the indie Cosmo cinema here. Film, which aroused controversy before its showing, was in for an original four weeks, and is staying for nine.

Organized bus parties helped to hypo biz plus pulpit talks praising it by Protestant ministers.

ALAN YOUNG

"Gentlemen Marry Brunettes"

Bail Us Out

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in effect for many years, though theatre overhead has increased substantially.

Since 1950-51, costs of operation in the theatres has skyrocketed. Everything you buy, whether it is carbons, carpet material for recovering cut seats—everything the theatre must purchase—has gone up anywhere from 100-200%. Labor costs have been forced up, on the average, at least 30%. Then too, in 1953-1954 capital investments in these theatres in middle class towns, for widescreen installations and CinemaScope presented a terrific problem—a problem as to where to get the money to finance them. It wasn't how to defray the cost of equipment that worried exhibitors solely, it was the construction costs involved in changing prosceniums which called for new curtains, which called for new track and curtain controls, which in turn called for relocating airconditioner and heating ducts, which called for new roof supports, wiring junction locations and, in many instances, relocation of exits.

A Salute to Skouras

These middle class town theatres had to go for CinemaScope; there was no other way they could supply the insatiable demand of their operations for product. Exhibitors feel that CinemaScope, now that most of the shooting has died down, is a most important contribution to their operation, and to the industry. Without the development of CinemaScope the take in most of these towns would be down 30% to 40% below the present level. So their hats are off to Spyros Skouras. Then too, Al Lichtman's and Bill Gehring's assurances to exhibitors that they wanted them to show a profit on Fox pictures has created a tremendous amount of good will for Fox because it is in such contrast to the treatment meted out by some of the other companies. This good will for Fox has resulted in Fox securing choice playing times and rapid playoff of their product before the national advertising on the pictures has been lost and no doubt accounts, at least in part, for Fox's healthy current financial statement.

Metro also enjoys the good will of exhibitors in this territory. It is true Metro has had a below-par year in 1954 for boxoffice smashes when compared to the high standard they usually maintain. However, the exhibitors, because of the good will Metro enjoys, again went along with them, gave them preferred playdates early enough to take full advantage of the fine national advertising campaigns Metro always employs in merchandising their films. So the net results weren't too bad for Metro or the exhibitors. There is a lot of enthusiasm here for the impressive Metro lineup in 1955 for it appears that they will pick up the 1954 slack, and then some, when their releases hit the market.

That 'Product' Problem

One of the big problems of the middle class exhibitors here is what to do to hold business up when that old product faucet is turned off—as it was last April, May and early June, and as was the case also in 1953. When the faucet is turned on again the boxoffice momentum is at the bottom, and even with several hit pictures playing it takes four to five weeks to build the b.o. momentum back up, and it never seems to build back to as high a level. Since Oct. 15 we have been going through another famine for lack of grossing pictures. The losses that accrue during these lean periods cannot be picked up during the months that good grossing product is flowing into the market.

One thing is a certainty—if, in 1955, film terms don't hold to reasonable levels many of these two-theatre towns will become one-theatre towns and that's no good for the exhibitor, distributor, or producer.

However, there are a few bright spots on the horizon. Such as DCA, with the pictures they are going to release during 1955; TOA's plan to finance production; and numerous other plans afoot to increase the number of available pictures. The apparent fine lineup of product coming from all companies during January and February, and the hope that they will continue to keep coming during April, May and June, is another plus.

So maybe the paralyzing boxoffice decline that started here in 1950 will have run its gamut and 1955 will be the year we've been waiting to come along and bail us out.

Quality Pix Average Can Be Upped With More Shots at Prod. Target

By S. H. FABIAN

(President, Stanley Warner Corp.)

As an exhibitor, I keep thinking about the one subject that bothers everybody in the picture business. How do we get better pictures?

S. H. Fabian

And since it is the objective of this Anniversary issue of VARIETY to stimulate the flow of ideas, I have a very simple theory to toss upon the table.

First, we have to stop believing what isn't so. It is generally believed we can't do much about improving the quality of the product; that taking the whole output of the studios over a reasonable period, the quality of the product averages out to the same level. Some years one studio has a remarkable run of prime product and some years, it's another studio that has the good luck.

Like the rest of us, I have gone on year after year believing this fallacy without thinking much about it. But as I watch what is happening since the Cinerama revolution hit the industry and I see that you can create quality by consistently, intelligently aiming at the target, I have an entirely different notion of future picture production. I now think we can definitely raise the standards so that we produce a higher percentage of good product and, therefore our average can go higher.

My idea runs something like this: The more people who think about production, the more people who enter production, the more production teams that are set up, the more chances we have to level up the boxoffice appeal of the average motion picture.

In other words, if more people keep shooting at the target, more of them will hit the bull's eye. To believe otherwise is to accept the idea that there is a limited amount of talent available for making motion pictures. Our methods of recruiting and assembling talent to make pictures has been haphazard. There is an enormous untouched reservoir of undeveloped talent yearning to be in show-business. Never have there been so many colleges and universities with drama groups; never before so many Little Theatre units operating around the country as there are today.

If our industry offers increasing opportunities for these aspiring youngsters through increased production units, it is inevitable that more talent will gravitate towards Hollywood. Instead of television taking the play away from a dwindling picture production, an expanding motion picture industry will easily draw the most zealous and ambitious candidate for work in all departments of production, since obviously our own industry still tops them all in glamor.

Our theatres are in direct competition with another form of exhibition—television—which is fighting to improve its programs. We can't sit still either. We dare not admit that either motion picture talent or the quality of motion picture entertainment is fixed, static and cannot be improved on.

On this basis, who can aree with the people in our business favoring the idea of "fewer and better pictures"? Our slogan should be—must be—*more and better pictures:* A trend that is in the cards if we set out to acomplish this goal.

Bigness By Itself

And while my ax is sharpened for tradition-smashing, I would like to take a crack at the "big budget—big picture" concept.

It is true that certain types of pictures with scope, spectacular values and a multi-star cast must run into big money, but you can't make all pictures of that character. The public would get fed up with a wholesale diet of that kind of entertainment, just as it gets tired of any cycle which lasts too long. But I am convinced that one of the great assets of our business is the bread and butter feature in which the principal ingredient is an idea, a slant, an expose, a theme which can be merchandised, exploited and sold to a profitable gross for both producer and exhibitor.

You will notice I keep thinking of ours as a mass business, of an industry with thousands of theatres available to show product, in big towns as well as small, in neighborhoods as well as metropolitan areas. I believe we should not give up thinking of our industry as the one outstanding supplier of quality mass entertainment. The market has absorbed frequent advanced-admission price features, but there is no doubt that you increase sales resistance to motion picture entertainment with so many advanced-price productions.

It is the universal feeling of exhibitors that he overall affect of a fixed admission price as a regular policy is much better for continuity of patronage than a fluctuating scale.

Blames Exhibs

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the eye of the public and the producer, but not often enough. The public and the producer are quick enough to catch the flash, but it takes a lot of prodding to get the exhibitor to go along with you when you try to advance the stature of the new player. Just try to get one to run a special trailer or join you in the efforts to promote a new player. They prefer the easier and cheaper way, so they don't have to expend the effort or their own money in exploitation.

So the producer has to wait until he can arrange a package of names. When you have to do this it stands to reason that you are going to be able to make very few pictures. If every so-called star guaranteed a boxoffice hit I could see the logic in waiting for a star or a group of them, but we have seen certain pictures fail even when the cast was loaded with these "name values." If exhibitors need more "better pictures with new stars" they should concentrate more on making the public more story conscious and should not constantly hammer us for names.

A bestselling novel or a successful stage show or musical could enable us to develop more talent if the public were educated to anticipate a picture for its dramatic or entertainment worth, as it does in the case of stage productions.

Once this was accomplished new talent would develop rapidly and we, who make the pictures, would not have to depend on a mere handful of stars.

I am in favor of the star system and always will be, but deplore the reluctance of the exhibitor to give even a slight encouragement in the development of new stars. So long as the exhibitor has angues the distributor with the same old question—"Who's in it?"—in the parley for booking a picture, producers generally will be fearful taking chances with new faces in the all-important leading roles of their pictures.

U.S. O'Seas Pix Earnings Set New Mark; Outlook For 1955 Equally Bullish

By NATHAN D. GOLDEN
(U. S. Dept. of Commerce)

Washington.

It now seems fairly apparent that 1954 remittances of film earnings from exhibition of United States films in the international market will exceed the record of $170,000,000 estimated for 1953. Estimates for 1954 have ranged from $180,000,000 to $185,000,000. This increase in remittances is generally attributable to larger gross receipts for U.S. films shown abroad, as well as the stronger foreign exchange position in a number of countries which has led to a gradual decline in the pool of blocked film earnings.

During the past year foreign remittances have maintained their high level from such major foreign markets as the United Kingdom, Brazil, Japan, Canada, Italy, Germany and France, and there has been an easing of foreign exchange restrictions covering film remittances from other markets such as Argentina, Denmark and Sweden.

Probably the most important factor in the growth of foreign business for U.S. films is the increasing number of high quality productions which are being exported. Film company officials returning from trips abroad have commented on the very good attendance at showings of American pix films in practically all foreign markets.

The outlook for the future, however, is not without its problems. While at one time the major concern of U.S. film companies operating in the international market was one of foreign exchange with which to make remittances, during the past few years they have been faced with increasing legislative activity designed to protect and promote national film industries. This legislation may be in the form of limitations placed on the number of U.S. films to be imported, or it may guarantee the national film industry playing time for its product regardless of its quality or appeal to the audience. Financial assistance is also given to national film industries, and in a number of countries the revenue for this subsidy is derived mainly from taxes levied on U.S. films.

The foreign market for U.S. films has become increasingly important to the economy of the American industry. A recent industry estimate stated that approximately 42% of the total income of the U.S. film industry is accounted for by foreign revenues. What makes the 1954 record remittances so impressive is the fact that during the year there were few large increases in the transfer of blocked funds reported, with increased remittances mostly being the result of larger gross receipts at the theatres throughout the world that exhibit U.S. films.

Film Agreements

Film agreements with all of the major European countries were satisfactorily negotiated during the past year, and no major film pact will be up for negotiation until the spring of 1955, when the Japanese agreement expires.

The new Anglo-American film agreement was speedily accomplished. To cover the year beginning Oct. 1, 1954, the agreement again provides for the transfer of $17,000,000 and contains provisions permitting convertibility of certain amounts of U.S. production investments in Britain. One notable change was made in the new agreement. U.S. film companies may now remit a portion of the American distributors' share of the Eady Tax Plan money, not to exceed $2,250,000. The Eady Tax Plan provides for subsidies to the British film industries and in previous years the U.S. film companies have waived their rights to convert and remit their share of this subsidy. American film companies are hopeful that the dollar position of the United Kingdom will be such that at the expiration of this one-year pact it will no longer be necessary to negotiate film remittance agreements with the British government.

The Franco-American film accord, however, was not so easily accomplished. While the agreement with the French was worked out and signed in November, 1953, it took almost continuous negotiations during the first six months of 1954 before it was activated. The agreement covers the two-year period, July, 1953 to June, 1955, and provides for a basic quota of 90 import permits for U.S. films during each year and supplementary authorizations not to exceed 20 permits. Assurance is offered that at least 109 permits will be granted each year. During the period of the agreement, U.S. film companies as a group are authorized to convert their franc earnings into dollars at the official rate of exchange up to $200,000 per month. Franc earnings in excess of this amount are blocked and may be employed for various specified purposes.

Under the terms of the Italian film agreement, covering the period Sept. 1, 1954 to Aug. 31, 1956, U.S. film companies are permitted to remit a reported $3,000,000 at the official rate of exchange, plus the transfer of the equivalent of their payments for dubbing fees and 5% of any balance remaining in their blocked accounts at the end of each calendar year. It is expected that U.S. film companies will be permitted to remit annually about $4,200,000 under this agreement. Utilization of blocked U.S. film earnings in Italy was to be further liberalized to permit compensation deals, and it is believed that at the present time U.S. film companies have very little blocked funds in Italy. One notable change in the new agreement was the elimination of the payment to the Italians by U.S. film companies of 12½% of U.S. film earnings in Italy, which funds were used to promote the export of Italian films.

The so-called "Gentlemen's Agreement" between the U.S. film industry and the West German film industry, which limits the U.S. feature film imports into West Germany to 240, was extended for the 1954-55 distribution year. On Sept. 16, 1954, the German government virtually abolished the system of blocked accounts. On that date all blocked accounts were to be transferable to any country with which Germany had a payment agreement or might be credited to so-called liberalized capital accounts. Balances in the liberalized capital accounts could be used for any purpose within Germany. While direct transfers of such accounts to dollars is not yet possible, transfers can be made indirectly through any European Payments Union currency at a small discount. U.S. film companies have no difficulty in transferring their film earnings from Germany at the present time.

It appears that the only country in Europe where U.S. film companies are having foreign exchange difficulties at present is Turkey.

The Latin American market for U.S. films has remained good during 1954, with no major problems or difficulties being encountered there insofar as the importation of films and the transfer of dollars were concerned. Even Argentina, where for many years U.S. pix distributors have faced import restrictions, censorship problems and the banning of dollar exchange for films, showed an improvement during 1954. Import permits into Argentina are being granted to U.S. companies on a regular basis and progress has been made in transferring blocked funds through official allocation of dollars and through compensation deals.

Under date of April 26, 1954, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Japan announced the plan for the import of foreign films in the 1954 fiscal year, which included the following preface: "As a result of the budget retrenchment under stringency of the foreign currency exchange situation, it is necessary to curtail considerably the import of foreign films in 1954 with respect to number and foreign currency remittances." The basic quota for 1954-55, beginning April 1, 1954, was fixed at 160 films to be allocated as follows: 121 to the dollar area, 15 to the sterling area, and 24 to the open account area. In 1953-54 there were 146 licenses allocated to the dollar area. Remittances of royalties in foreign currency shall be permitted within the following limits: (1) For films imported under a percentage rental system, the remittance shall be limited to 25% of distribution income when the non-resident's share of the receipts is not more than 60%, and to 20% when more than 60%. (2) For films imported under a flat rental system, allocations of foreign currency will be approved at the time permission is given to the import contract. Accumulated yen earnings in excess of that allowed to be remitted shall be deposited in the Non-Resident's Film Account of a foreign exchange bank and may be used only on a permission basis.

While the outlook for 1955 is difficult to forecast, barring unforeseen difficulties, foreign business for U.S. films should continue at a very high level. One thing seems certain, however, and that is that the U.S. must continue to export films of high quality if it is to maintain its present high position in the foreign market. Competition from foreign produced films has been increasing greatly in recent years, but it is generally believed that where the people have a free choice in the selection of their motion picture entertainment, U.S. films will continue to obtain their share of the playing time on the screens of the world.

Have CinemaScope

Continued from page 7

tential of the screen as an instrument for the public good and a means of cementing friendships among the people of the free world. Producers and exhibitors in the future, as in the past, will play an important role in this service to mankind.

As a specific example of this 20th Century-Fox is presently coproducing a picture which is a collaboration of French and German talent. This picture—"The Oasis"—in which the Germans and French are working together, is being produced in both languages under a German producer and a French director with French and German stars.

In doing this our company is recognizing the urgency of the problem of French and German relations which the American Government, through President Eisenhower and Secretary of State Dulles, is today bending every effort to meet because it is so important to a Free Europe and the world's welfare. Therefore, we hope that our efforts in this direction will encourage other American industry to emulate this form of collaboration wherever possible in the support of our Government's policies, and of the forward step taken by France in support of European solidarity under the leadership of Premier Mendes-France.

CinemaScope, of course, is the medium in which the French-German production is being made.

14,000 C'Scope Installations

Today there are over 14,000 CinemaScope installations in the theatres of the world—10,500 in the U.S. and Canada and 3,500 in foreign countries. By the end of July there will be more than 13,000 domestic and about 7,500 foreign installations.

On account of these installations, producers throughout the world are producing CinemaScope pictures. With the exception of Paramount and Republic, the American companies are producing CinemaScope pictures, and in addition overseas producers will have from 50 to 75 in production or in preparation during 1955.

Twentieth Century-Fox will undertake to release a total of 30 CinemaScope pictures during 1955, 20-22 of which will be produced in its own studio, and the balance with independent producers here and abroad. These pictures will reflect the tremendous range of subject matter and treatment made possible by CinemaScope which is adaptable both to spectacular and intimate presentation.

Triumph and Sorrow

The year 1954 was truly a milestone in my long association with the motion picture industry. At the same time it was a tragic one to me personally because of the death of my beloved brother. Charlie was one of the most powerful influences of my life. We worked together for 40 years in the service of the industry, and his realization that the theatre is the lifeline of our industry has had far reaching impact.

For the sympathy that has been extended to me and for the tributes that have been paid to my late brother I cannot refrain from expressing my deep gratitude.

Nor can I fail to express to those who have helped to sustain my courage in my irreparable loss, my heartfelt thanks for their equally sympathetic support during the crucial period when it was so imperative that the theatres of the world be given new hope and a chance for greater prosperity.

My belief is that 1955 will be the best year for our industry since 1949.

Christmas Party: Unofficial

By FRANCIS WINIKUS

I have no idea why I should pitch the reminiscent; maybe it's the season for "remember when"; I get that way occasionally, sometimes without the aid of eight martinis. Anyway, it was just around the 1940 holiday season and I had been writing copy for Paul Lazarus at Warner Bros. Paul was in charge of trade paper advertising and I was beginning to make my mark with the usual immortal prose associated with trade slogans. Then Paul left the company for the prosaic reason of earning more money and I was left to the tender mercies of a variety of bosses, most of whom thought my copy could stand improvement. That this was rank calumny goes without saying. The long view indicates that they were right. At the time, I sulked, cried in my beer, plotted dire revenge and poured salted tears on my own open wounds.

On the ground floor of the Warners building, facing 45th Street, stood a long honored bistro named the Famous Kitchen. I hear that it's still functioning and that its proprietors now own blocks of real estate and have a purple velvet rope to keep out the hoi polloi. In those days, you could get one heliuva martini for two bits and an eight course lunch for six. In those days of youth and vigor, my par for the course was five poisons and the lunch. But this day, hollow-eyed and pulsing-spleened because of a copy turndown, I dropped anchor at the bar about 11 a.m., and embarked on a long-range plan for emptying the Famous Kitchen cellars of gin and vermouth.

Sympathy, Just Sympathy

As time went on, various business associates came by to hear my sordid tale and sympathize. Finally, it was three in the afternoon and some of my sympathizers, true to the Faith, had tilted the wassail bowl with me and were all showing signs of wear and tear.

You may be aware of the hierarchy of dining rooms for the home office Warner workers. They range from (1) a splendid cafeteria up through (2) the echelons of junior executives, waitress-served emporia to the (3) sanctum sanctorum of the Brothers Warner. Rumor at the time had it that only the tenderest-fleshed tibia of humming bird was served here. It was understood further that anyone in my salary bracket caught eating off the presidential plate was immediately categorized for unemployment insurance.

But the company of sympathizers, the dulcet alcoholic eaters and the fact that the kitchen of the Famous Kitchen had closed for the afternoon gave me the courage of ten. With several supporting arms, I made a neighborhood grocery where beer was purveyed and corn-beef sandwiches were sold. Thus buttressed, I essayed the company elevator to the Holy of Holies, ordered glasses and plates and made a more or less satisfying smorgasbord.

But all was not without notice. A company Sherlock, casing the joint, came across our slug-happy group. The results were immediate. Four of my compatriots were immediately summoned to the flight deck for court-martial while I returned to my desk where I slumbered and belched what remained of my afternoon away.

Later I learned the results of the inquisition. The four caught culprits were raked over the coals. Only the good tidings of the Christmas season prevented their mass dismissal. But of all the words they heard that day, the ones that rankled most were these:

"The next time any of you characters get hold of a nice, cleancut youngster like Winikus and get him loaded, you're finished—FINISHED!"

Yes, I still drink martinis, but on the East Side. Maybe, one of these days, I can buy a couple for the Warner Brothers.

No 'Shortage' of Quality

Continued from page 29

used. And, I might say too, regardless of the numbers, small though they might be, of patrons who show up at his theatre to view the images on the screen.

I want to state at once that I don't believe there is a single exhibitor who fits the description in the foregoing paragraph. An exhibitor who could be so described and who could thrive in business would certainly be something of a miracle man. There is no doubt that all whose lot is cast with the exhibition of motion pictures are very much intent on identifying their theatres only with quality films, and are as anxious as they ever were to see every seat occupied by a paying patron from the time the first show goes on.

However, all this hue and cry about product shortages and the allegations against the distributors that accompany the wailing are enough to make a fellow wonder if there is any desire to make common sense out of today's situation.

Back in 1946 the footage from the Hollywood and overseas mills certainly far exceeded that which was produced last year, but the sad irony surrounding this fact was that in that year the exchanges of all companies could display vaults of prints that did no more than gather dust. Here certainly was an abundance of product. But a lot of it was totally disregarded. Prints of then current pictures just never were used. To be sure, 1946 was characterized by some fine top pictures, but there's no denying that most of the films produced for release at that time did not enjoy the wide circulation and number of contracts we find applying to today's top pictures.

In 1954 the quality average of productions from virtually every company was unqualifiedly higher. The result: bigger grosses and extended playing time. There is no need for me to detail the experience with pictures like "White Christmas," "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers," "A Star Is Born," "On the Waterfront," and so many others; their sensational achievements are a matter of trade record.

But there is something else to consider. Even today fresh prints are going begging in exchanges. I refer to prints of pictures of only slightly less than top stature, and to prints of firstrate reissue pictures of many companies. The latter are pictures of proven vast audiences, together with the hundreds of thousands of persons who would gladly go to see again a favorite film of the past.

The public wants quality motion pictures. It has manifested this desire time and time again at the boxoffices. Just as it has repeatedly turned thumbs down on inferior pictures. So, we will continue to strive to give the public highgrade motion pictures, which will keep patronage high at the theatres. I cannot see our producers dedicating themselves to making turkeys after what moviegoers revealed last year, i.e., their all-out patronage of better pictures.

The men and women of Hollywood are doing their best to make as many topflight pictures as they can. And I can see them limited only by the number of high quality stories on which they can lay their hands, with, of course, the value of good casts and other necessary ingredients not to be overlooked. Certainly 1954 proved they are succeeding, and I feel sure 1955, 1956 and all the years to follow will yield added evidence of this success.

COLUMBIA PICTURES

looks forward
with confidence
and pride in its product
as the unprecedented
boxoffice success of

"THE CAINE MUTINY"

and

"ON THE WATERFRONT"

is being followed by

"THE VIOLENT MEN"

"THE LONG GRAY LINE"

"THREE FOR THE SHOW"

"THE MAN FROM LARAMIE"

and coming soon

"MY SISTER EILEEN"

Prince of Players
(COLOR-C'SCOPE)

Sock dramatization of Edwin Booth's life, including a generous dose of Shakespeare. High b.o. promise with proper selling.

Twentieth Century-Fox release of a Philip Dunne production. Stars Richard Burton, Maggie McNamara. John Derek, Raymond Massey. Charles Bickford, Elizabeth Sellars, Eva Le Gallienne; features Christopher Cook, Dayton Lummis, Ian Keith, Paul Stader, Louis Alexander, William Walker, Jack Raine, Charles Cane, Betty Flint, Mae Marsh, Stanley Hall, Sarah Padden, Ruth Clifford, Ivan Hayes, Paul Frees, Ben Wright, Melinda Markey, Eleanor Audley, Percival Vivian, George Dunn, Ruth Warren, Richard Cutting, Lane Chandler, Steve Darrell, George Melford, Tom Fadden, Henry Kulky, Olan Soule. Directed by Dunne. Screenplay, Moss Hart, based on the Eleanor Ruggles book; camera (color by De Luxe), Charles G. Clarke; editor, Dorothy Spencer; music, Bernard Herrmann; special consultant on Shakespearean scenes, Miss Gallienne. Running time, 102 MINS.

Edwin Booth	Richard Burton
Mary Devlin	Maggie McNamara
John Wilkes Booth	John Derek
Junius Brutus Booth	Raymond Massey
Dove Prescott	Charles Bickford
Asia	Elizabeth Sellars
The Queen	Eva Le Gallienne
Edwin Booth (Age 10)	Christopher Cook
English Doctor	Dayton Lummis
"King" in Hamlet	Ian Keith
Laertes	Paul Stader
John Booth (Age 12)	Louis Alexander
Old Ben	William Walker
Theatre Manager	Jack Raine
Theatre Assistant	Charles Cane
Lady Macbeth	Betty Flint
Witch in Macbeth	Mae Marsh
Abrahem Lincoln	Stanley Hall
Mrs. Abe Lincoln	Sarah Padden
English Nurse	Ruth Clifford
Bernardo	Ivan Hayes
Francisco	Paul Frees
Horatio	Ben Wright
Young Lady	Melinda Markey
Mrs. Montchesington	Eleanor Audley
Polonius	Percival Vivian
Doorman	George Dunn
Nurse	Ruth Warren
Doctor	Richard Cutting
Colonel	Lane Chandler
Major Rathbone	Steve Darrell
Stage Doorman	George Melford
Trenchard	Tom Fadden
Bartender	Henry Kulky
Catesby	Olan Soule

Within recent times there has risen the notion—contested by some and endorsed by others—that the film audience, like the country at large, is in the throes of a slow but steady maturing process. "Prince of Players," one of the handsomest and most perfectly composed CinemaScope productions to date, should go a long way in answering the question.

Produced by Philip Dunne, and also his first directing chore, pic tells a powerfully dramatic story of a great American actor of the past—Edwin Booth—and, without overaccenting the issue, it weaves into its narrative also the tragic tale of Booth's brother, John Wilkes, who gained fame and infamy by assassinating Lincoln. From a pictorial point-of-view, as well as in terms of its superb performance by Richard Burton, "Prince of Players" is a true prince of a picture, making full and intelligent use of the wide C'Scope screen. It is Hollywood using its cameras to very best advantage, and the combination of these factors won't be lost on the b.o.

But "Prince" is more than just a film. It is also a serious and for the most part outstandingly successful attempt to make the stage, and specifically Shakespeare, serve the purpose of the screen. There are excerpts, staged with skill and acted masterfully, from "Richard III," "Romeo and Juliet," "Hamlet" and "King Lear." They are, in their way, a revolutionary new approach to such entertainment, or maybe they haven't been done this well before. Under the skillful guidance of Dunne, these scenes come to live with fire and drama to make great entertainment.

It is obvious that the "natural" audience for these particular ingredients is limited. Also, one or two of them are too long for comfort. Yet, if there is any truth in the assertion that the public is ready for "mature entertainment," "Prince" should be a sockeroo all over. It is an emotional portrait of a great man, and in many ways it is warm and tender and romantic. One couldn't ask for much more.

In the part of Edwin Booth, Burton proves why Britain's Old Vic rates him so highly. He is a performer of great competence, delighting in a part tailormade to his talents. On stage and off, he etches a portrayal that stands out with its fire and strength. His Booth, overshadowed by tragedy, has a firmness and sensitivity for which he deserves great credit.

In the supporting parts, Maggie McNamara has charm, even though her Juliet pales before the conviction of Burton. Their scene in the garden of a New Orleans brothel, humorous and yet tender and wistful, is a delight. Miss McNamara does better in the dramatic parts. John Derek as John Wilkes Booth (hotheaded and envious brother and assassin of Lincoln), comes up with a fine performance. Raymond Massey brings to the tragic figure of Junius Brutus Booth the elder a curious dignity which clashes with his drunken ravings. If the character is overdrawn, it is properly so. Charles Bickford, as Booth's manager, lends valuable support, and so do Elizabeth Sellars and Eva Le Gallienne, the latter seen briefly as Hamlet's mother.

Moss Hart's screenplay is balanced, taking the audience in and out of the Shakespearean scenes smoothly. The ending particularly, again thanks to a fine bit of staging and brilliant acting by Burton, has merit and winds the film at just the right note. Dunne's direction is imaginative and manages to build up tensions in what primarily is a conversation piece. It may be the job of a megging novice, but one wouldn't know it.

As a producer, Dunne has done himself proud, for this is a richly mounted production that delights the eye. Charles G. Clarke's lensing is great in every respect, and the De Luxe color is perfect. It all adds up to a very fine production. *Hift.*

Lilacs in the Spring
(BRITISH—SONGS)
(COLOR)

Herbert Wilcox filmusical starring Anna Neagle and Errol Flynn, latter making song and dance bow. Bright exploitation angles to hypo b.o. prospects.

London, Dec. 21.

Republic release of Herbert Wilcox production. Stars Anna Neagle, Errol Flynn. David Farrar; features Kathleen Harrison, Peter Graves, Helen Haye. Directed by Herbert Wilcox. Adapted from Robert Nesbitt's "The Glorious Days," by Harold Purcell; camera (Technicolor), Max Greene; editor, Reginald Beck; music, Harry Parr Davis; incidental score, Robert Fernon. At London Pavilion, Dec. 21, '54. Running time, 94 MINS.

Carole Beaumont, Lillian Grey, Queen Victoria, Nell Gwyn	Anna Neagle
John Beaumont	Errol Flynn
Charles King, King Charles	David Farrar
Kate	Kathleen Harrison
Albert Gutman, Prince Albert	Peter Graves
Lady Drayton	Helen Haye
Old George	Scott Sanders
1st Woman	Alma Taylor
2nd Woman	Hetty King
Hollywood Director	Alan Gifford
Young Carole	Jennifer Mitchell
Very Young Carole	Gillian Harrison
Reporter	George Margo

The vehicle chosen by Anna Neagle to mark her return to the legit stage in Coronation year has been turned into a filmusical by producer - director Herbert Wilcox. Apart from a few minor cuts, it follows the pattern of the original stage success. In its screen form this is likely to have the same b.o. impact, appealing mainly to the carriage trade. In America (where it is being released by United Artists), its success will depend largely on the exploitation possibilities of Errol Flynn in his first song and dance role.

The film, like the original play, "The Glorious Days," is a cavalcade of history in which Miss Neagle plays a variety of roles including Nell Gwyn and the young Queen Victoria. In the original legit version she also played the aging Queen, but this had been omitted from the screenplay.

As the story begins, she is seen as a wartime service performer who suffers concussion during an air-raid on London and imagines herself to be Nell Gwyn, with David Farrar playing King Charles. Plot returns to the scene of the accident where she is being courted by a British soldier of German origin, and then goes to his grandmother's country house in Windsor. Another blackout, and she is Queen Victoria introducing the waltz to her court to the music of Johann Strauss.

And just to add to the variety of roles, Miss Neagle subsequently plays her own mother in the days when she was courted and married to Errol Flynn, the man who elevated her to stardom (he was lost in the crowd after the war) and then found fame and fortune in Hollywood via the birth of the talkies.

The production, with its snippets of stage musicals and spectacular dance sequences, has a colorful and opulent look; it is, however, a little obscure in its development, brashly sentimental and somewhat confusing. Miss Neagle sails through her various roles with the elegant poise for which she is renowned, discounting her attempts in song and dance fields. Errol Flynn, in a part which calls for emotional overtones, does surprisingly well and his limited attempts in the song and dance fields are worthy of commendation. David Farrar is not too well served as Miss Neagle's producer-admirer. Kathleen Harrison has a typical part as a cockney barmaid. Peter Graves, from the original stage production, plays the other suitor, and also Prince Albert.

The songs include classics of the calibre of "Lily of Laguna," "Tipperary," "Blighty," "We'll Gather Lilacs," with Noel Coward's "Dance Little Lady" and John Neat's "Lassie from Lancashire." Harry Parr Davies composed original music, with an excellent incidental score by Robert Farnon. Philip and Betty Buchel devised the imaginative dance sequences. *Myro.*

'New Faces'

Continued from page 7

her home studio. In three sucessive pictures at Paramount, "Rear Window", "The Country Girl" and "The Bridges at Toko-Ri," latter just released, she burgeoned into the "hottest" Hollywood newcomer in many years. Metro, however, really set her on the road to stardom when it spotted her importantly opposite Clark Gable in "Mogambo", a '53 release.

Otherwise, Hollywood's New Face front in '54 was distinguished by only three newcomers who appear headed for importance — Kim Novak ("Pushover" and "Phffft") and Bob Francis ("Caine Mutiny") both at Columbia, and Edmund Purdom ("Student Prince", Metro, and "The Egyptian" (20th Fox), under contract to Metro.

Neither Paramount or 20th-Fox gave the screen a newcomer of promise in '54. Ditto RKO, Republic or Allied.

Foreign Possibilities

Warner Bros. placed a number of newcomers in important roles in '54, but only one of them, Paul Newman, introduced in "The Silver Challce", has been seen as yet. The studio firmly believes that Newman is star material.

Otherwise, WB's New Faces will all have to prove themselves in 1955, when their first important efforts will go into release. Among them are James Dean, who debuts in the lead of "East of Eden"; Rossana Podesta, Italian actress playing the title role in "Helen of Troy"; and Joan Collins, English actress getting her big American chance in "Land of the Pharoahs"; Perry Lopez, out of the national company of "South Pacific", who is importantly spotted in "Battle Cry"; Rossana Rory, Italian actress, in the lead of "The River Changes", filmed in Germany; Harold Maresch, German actor who has been in several foreign films, playing opposite Miss Rory in "River Changes", and Gregory Walcott, from tv, in a key role in "Battle Cry".

Universal, Columbia and Metro have a number of novitiates under contract and are grooming them for film roles. However, none of these stock companies measure up in numbers of players to what they were several years ago. Chief reason is that it's no longer economically sound for the majors, with their curtailed production programs, to maintain large stock companies, since the opportunities for new players are so few.

Time was when a talent scout's excursion to Broadway swamped him with calls from agents and players. Not so today, at least with those young players who are in tv. Their indifference to Hollywood is such as to give a talent Daniel Boone an inferiority complex.

Political Joke

Continued from page 3

ing off politics? Remember Calvin Coolidge jokes, Hoover ribbing and New Deal needling? Will Rogers made a career of it, and what comedian was ever more beloved by the American people than Will? His gift for throwing a humorous light on every ridiculous political situation and puffed-up political figure was considered a most healthful tonic and good democracy.

What a field-day Will Rogers would have had with Senator Joe McCarthy. Yet, with the possible exception of Bob Hope, comedians have ducked the opportunity.

It may be fear, a new fear, a growing fear that any reference to any politico, made in jest, may kickback. But through the generations Americans always have enjoyed laughing at, as often as with, the men they elect to office whenever the situation warrants.

"Of Thee I Sing," as a political satire, was a classic. "State Of The Union's" best lines—and certainly the most audience-appreciated — were those barbs slanted at politics and political figures.

What has brought on the new silence? Even jokes about taxes—though taxes were never a joke—have dried up on the professional level, albeit not with the public. We're still kidding the Army and Navy; and what, I ask, gets more honest and immediate response, especially from veterans? We all remember when monologists like Julius Tannen based whole routines on current events. Laughter even used to ease economic tensions—remember the WPA jokes?

Actually, politicians must like being kidded. What, on the whole, strikes a happier note with them than the well-done-on-both-sides broiling they get at the annual Gridiron Dinner of the Washington newspapermen? Maybe they should put that show on the road just to prove a point, for politicians obviously have an open mind on the subject, although some mistake a vacancy for an opening.

Boy! Hand me those golf clubs . . .

German Actors' Dubbing

Continued from page 4

tre in Berlin. Both Grundgens and Barlog object to their actors doing this "unprofessional" type of work for the money and not the glory, so dubbing sessions are sometimes set up for midnight or later, to allow the actors to finish their onstage parts, then synch until dawn, and sneak back to the stage for morning rehearsals.

Even when the U. S. part is mouthed by a wellknown German actor, the actor's name is rarely mentioned, for an assortment of reasons: (1) the American companies prefer, of course, to promote their big stars, and it might detract if the aud realized a famous German actor was speaking; (2) when German names were formerly used, the reviewers tended to emphasize the "word performance" of the German rather than the "acting performance" of the American; (3) the German stars, particularly those whose stage directors object, prefer oblivion; and (4) in many communities, the people actually believe the star is speaking German because the dubbing is so perfectly matched with the lip movements on screen.

Dubbing in Germany has reached such a peak of perfection that it's almost impossible to tell that the star is not speaking, and with the cooperation of the dubbing studios, the voice of the star remains constant in all pix, so that whoever speaks for Marilyn Monroe in one role is heard as her in all her other films. Hence, plenty of Germans would be astounded if someone told them that Miss Monroe isn't equally proficient in German and in English.

$7,500 Pic Dubbing Cost

Dubbing cost of a picture in Germany usually runs to about $7,500 for the sound negative alone, excluding lab costs and prints. This is in contrast to the States, where because dubbing is not a common practice the task is longer and much more expensive.

Dubbing in Europe became big business before World War II, when all the majors had nearly perfect techniques for offering the U. S. films abroad in excellent native dialog. Then, during the war, some of the Hollywood studios, who had talented refugees on hand, decided to do the dubbing in Hollywood for postwar release. But unfortunately, the red tape wound around the cans so tightly that the covers never came off. Postwar European laws restricted the dubbing into German and French to be done within the borders of the nations, and the fine Hollywood dub jobs were never shown. Warners, for instance, still has on hand "All This and Heaven Too" and "Constant Nymph" dubbed into French by Charles Boyer but never cleared for release.

That Viennese Accent

In the postwar dub boom in Germany, some of the majors tried to do their work in Vienna, where the costs are lower than in Germany. But the Viennese accent is harsher than the pure German "stage accent," and the aud booed the results off the screens.

Alfred Kirschner, who did the first English-into-German synch work in 1929, in 1948 set up his dubbing headquarters in Berlin for the German work, and does most of the Warners dubbing there. 20th-Fox uses Ultra in Berlin and Columbia uses Berliner Synchron. Universal has the majority of its work done at Mono Productions in Munich. RKO, which formerly had its own dubbing department, decided that a separate company was more advantageous, and now delegates its work to Simoton, headed by its former dubbing director, Dr. Curt Simon. Metro is the only U. S. major still retaining its own dubbing department. Paramount, UA and Republic split their work among various dubbers.

Of the U. S. pix, about 80% of 1954's total of 250 was done at Berlin, with the others synched at Hamburg, Munich, Goettingen and Remagen.

Remagen, in the French Occupation Zone, has been doing almost all of the French-into-German films. It additionally handled 24 old films which UFA sold to U. S. television firms in 1953, turning the German full-lengths into 30-minute American features. Much of the dubbing was surreptitiously done by AFN announcers, who did the extra work on their days off to pick up some additional loot.

Fees the artists earn depend upon their name value, and upon working time. Top stars are usually paid a flat rate for the full film, and highest fee is about $1,250. Lowest fee is $750 a day for participating in crowd noises, and about $12 a day for a minor speaking part.

Small Exhib

Continued from page 29

them are cutting further risk by closing down altogether.

The loss of two or three small accounts in one month by any one exchange may pass without much comment, but with all exchanges experiencing something similar, the position is serious.

The small man has always been a vital phase in the film industry. It is a pity to see him fighting a losing battle. Film rentals to these showmen have been cut time and time again, and to such an extent that it has become practically unprofitable for the distributor to continue to supply; but if the distributor is to go without profit to keep his show operating until that mirage, Good Times, is turned into the real thing, the distributor must be considered when payable business returns.

There must be a great amount of sympathy for men who have, over a period of years, invested large sums of money in their business and have been ultimately forced to close down. Having spent many years as showmen, some of them have neither the cash resources nor initiative to carry on in any other sphere of activity. Therefore, the result is even more depressing. The closing of these smaller shows have a far-reaching effect. Now, when it is mentioned that So-and-So (in a one-horse town) has quit the business, the loss does not at first sight appear to be worthy of much attention, but when it is mentioned that some 100 of a similar class closed down recently, it offers much food for thought.

One practical way to stem the rot is to, as far as possible, nurse some of these theatres through the acute financial period they are now passing; give them a chance to recover. The distributor cannot be expected to shoulder the whole burden. Rent, light, power and all other angles of expenses should be given consideration in favor of the exhibitor.

Keep the small man in business and he will help to keep you in yours. Our industry will find it hard to live without them and an analysis of the business will prove that they are well worth saving; but the spirit of cooperation must come to the fore if all branches of the industry are to weather the present stress.

Common sense, understanding and cooperation between all concerned should do much towards bringing about a happy state of affairs and ultimately result in a recovery which will benefit everybody. And let us paste this in our respective hats—THE LITTLE MAN IS WORTH SAVING.

How The Companies Ran

Company-by-company breakdown shows that 20th-Fox provided the most of the year's best, its blue chips productions representing a total of $49,000,000 in domestic distribution rental. Following is the 1954 rundown on each company, the number of new films (no reissues) in the list of $1,000,000-and-above grossers and the totals.

Company	No. of Films	Total
20th	14	$49,000,000
Par	15	47,850,000
M-G	18	43,100,000
WB	18	42,950,000
U	19	35,800,000
Col	8	23,350,000
UA	10	16,650,000
RKO	7	11,450,000
B'Vista	2	4,350,000
Rep	2	3,800,000
AA	1	1,000,000
	114	280,220,000

All-Time Top Grossers

(VARIETY's *list of all-time blue chips productions—those films which have grossed, or promise to gross, $4,000,000 and over in domestic rentals—is herewith updated to include the 1954 releases and to take into account extra money earned by the boxoffice giants of previous years via reissue in the past year.*)

Feature, Company, Year	All-Time Gross
1. Gone With the Wind (M-G) (1939)	$33,500,000
2. The Robe (20th) (1953)	19,000,000
3. Greatest Show on Earth (Par) (1952)	12,800,000
4. From Here to Eternity (Col) (1953)	12,500,000
5. This Is Cinerama (C'rama) (1952)	12,500,000
6. White Christmas (Par) (1954)	12,060,000
7. Duel In the Sun (SRO) (1947)	11,300,000
8. Best Years of Our Lives (RKO) (1947)	11,200,000
9. Quo Vadis (M-G) (1952)	10,500,000
10. Samson and Delilah (Par) (1950)	9,000,000
11. Caine Mutiny (Col) (1954)	8,700,000
12. This Is the Army (WB) (1943)	8,500,000
13. Bells of St. Mary's (RKO) (1946)	8,000,000
14. Jolson Story (Col) (1947)	8,000,000
15. Shane (Par) (1953)	8,000,000
16. How to Marry Millionaire (20th) (1953)	7,200,000
17. Snow White (RKO) (1937)	7,150,000
18. David and Bathsheba (20th) (1951)	7,000,000
19. Glenn Miller Story (U) (1954)	7,000,000
20. Going My Way (Par) (1944)	6,500,000
21. Snows of Kilimanjaro (20th) (1952)	6,500,000
22. For Whom Bells Toll (Par) (1943)	6,300,000
23. Welcome Stranger (Par) (1947)	6,100,000
24. Hans Christian Andersen (RKO) (1953)	6,000,000
25. Ivanhoe (M-G) (1952)	6,000,000
26. Sergeant York (WB) (1941)	6,000,000
27. Peter Pan (RKO) (1953)	6,000,000
28. Egyptian (20th) (1954)	6,000,000
29. Life With Father (WB) (1947)	5,900,000
30. Blue Skies (Par) (1946)	5,700,000
31. Egg and I (U) (1947)	5,550,000
32. Big Parade (M-G) (1925)	5,500,000
33. House of Wax (WB) (1953)	5,500,000
34. Rear Window (Par) (1954)	5,300,000
35. Unconquered (Par) (1947)	5,250,000
36. Yearling (M-G) (1947)	5,250,000
37. Meet Me in St. Louis (M-G) (1945)	5,200,000
38. Mogambo (M-G) (1953)	5,200,000
39. Show Boat (M-G) (1951)	5,200,000
40. High and Mighty (WB) (1954)	5,200,000
41. Gentlemen Prefer Blondes (20th) (1953)	5,100,000
42. The Outlaw (RKO) (1946)	5,075,000
43. Forever Amber (20th) (1947)	5,050,000
44. Green Dolphin Street (M-G) (1947)	5,000,000
45. Jolson Sings Again (Col) (1949)	5,000,000
46. Moulin Rouge (UA) (1953)	5,000,000
47. Mrs. Miniver (M-G) (1942)	5,000,000
48. Razor's Edge (20th) (1947)	5,000,000
49. Red Shoes (E-L) (1948)	5,000,000
50. Song of Bernadotte (20th) (1943)	5,000,000
51. Magnificent Obsession (U) (1954)	5,000,000
52. Three Coins in Fountain (20th) (1954)	5,000,000
53. Spellbound (UA) (1946)	4,975,000
54. Since You Went Away (UA) (1944)	4,950,000
55. King Solomon's Mines (M-G) (1950)	4,825,000
56. Notorious (RKO) (1946)	4,800,000
57. Yankee Doodle Dandy (WB) (1942)	4,800,000
58. Salome (Col) (1953)	4,750,000
59. Seven Brides for 7 Bros. (M-G) (1954)	4,750,000
60. Battleground (M-G) (1950)	4,700,000
61. Annie Get Your Gun (M-G) (1950)	4,650,000

(Continued on page 63)

'54's Top Filmmakers

It's production that counts. In recent years the Hollywood trend, more so than ever, has been toward multiple values in each film. Individuals cannot be singled out with credit lines for having caused a boxoffice success; the writers, director, group of players, composer and conductor, screen process and production scope all are wrapped up in one project.

Consequently, the only spotlight, it seems, should be on the producers, as the men at the helm of each pic project, if there is to be a personal spotlight at all.

Following, then, are 1954's top filmmakers in the order in which their pictures had a monetary impact:

Producer	No. of Pix	Total Gross
Robert Emmett Dolan	1	$12,000,000
Robert Fellows	3	11,100,000
Pandro S. Berman	3	10,350,000
Aaron Rosenberg	2	9,250,000
Stanley Kramer	1	8,700,000

These are their pictures—Dolan, "White Christmas;" Fellows, "High and the Mighty," "Hondo" and "Ring of Fear;" Berman, "All the Brothers Were Valiant," "Knights of the Round Table" and "Long, Long Trailer;" Rosenberg, "Glenn Miller Story" and "Saskatchewan" and Kramer, "Caine Mutiny."

'White Xmas'

Continued from page 5

lin's soldier show produced by Warners in 1943. "Army's" gross was $8,500,000.

"Christmas" was the first time out for V'Vision and in this respect is somewhat akin to the top blockbuster of a year ago—"The Robe." Latter, which now looks to do about $19,000,000, or near, was the initial entry from 20th-Fox in its CinemaScope format.

The past year's picture business economics were considerably influenced, all for the good, by further use of C'Scope by 20th and other companies. The lineup of pix reeling in $1,000,000 or over in distribution returns includes 21 in C'Scope, particularly remarkable since this anamorphic way of processing is relatively new.

The "sell" value of C'Scope possibly will fall off as the future years go by; while it doubtless will enhance the attractiveness of a film, it alone may not mean the difference between profit and loss. No more than color. But that C'Scope is a plus of varying meaning cannot be disputed at this time. As long as it's axiomatic that the play's the thing, it's a certainty that several entries on the 1954 tall-coin films list would have had a less prominent rating had they not been in C'Scope.

Of major significance in the 1954 rundown of the better starters is the 20th-Fox showing. The Spyros P. Skouras-Darryl F. Zanuck-helmed outfit had only 14 films on the top-grossing list, following Universal's 19, Warners' and Metro's 18 each and Paramount's 15, but 20th's 14 heads the list in money with a total gross of $49,000,000 All 14 were in C'Scope.

Newcomer to the lineup of film distributors in the annual ratings is Buena Vista, subsidiary of Walt Disney Productions headed by Leo Samuels. This unit in the past year had two pictures and earns two mentions, "Living Desert" at $2,600,000 and "Vanishing Prairie" at $1,750,000.

Chalk up 1954 as a year of some sad disappointments and happy surprises. Samuel Goldwyn's "Best Years of Our Lives," in reissue, had been looked to as a continuing Klondike. But not so. Redistribution of this World War 11 gem proved a disheartening experiment, for it took in well under $1,000,000, when three times that figure had been anticipated.

The year also appeared to write finis to 3-D. Some pictures such as Warners' "Hondo" and Columbia's "Miss Sadie Thompson" reaped nice loot with that extra dimension but the overall experience set up this guidepost for Hollywood: 3-D has had it. (It was good while it lasted though; dig that $5,500,000 Warners raked in in 1953 with "House of Wax").

Finally, what about product diversification? It appears that Universal has the most complex payoff formula with its listing of films ranging from old-school westerns to bigscale drama ("Magnificent Obsession") and musical biopix ("Glenn Miller Story") and including the earthy Kettles. Only the "big" ones make money (ask any Hollywood hepster) but "Ma and Pa Kettle" is a $1,750,000 grosser. This is fiscally fine.

Antitrust Action

Continued from page 5

due to rule, shortly on whether this tax exemption is proper.

"In contrast to the movie industry," Wham says, "litigation in other industries has generally failed." For example, in the oil industry, following the consent decree of 1940, over 40 private treble damage suits were filed against oil companies. These were generally unsuccessful. The same situation occurred in the automotive field. "Treble damages," according to Wham, "have been more successfully obtained from the movie industry than from any other."

Citing compilations made by the Yale Law Journal, Wham says that it appears that 25% of all treble damage actions are eventually settled out of court. Film litigation is not included in this compilation to avoid duplication of replies (suits usually name several film companies at one time), but Wham says that it's understood that there is a higher percentage of out-of-court settlements made in film cases.

1954 Boxoffice Champs

(Here below are the big money pictures of 1954, including (a) some which went into release too late in 1953 for a previous determination of potential gross and excluding (b) the late entries of 1954 which are not in sufficient circulation to form the basis for projection of full playoff tally. Examples of the latter group are Disney's, "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea," 20th-Fox's, "There's No Business Like Show Business," Paramount's, "Country Girl," United Artists', "Vera Cruz," Warners', "A Star Is Born," Metro's, "So Deep In My Heart," Universal's, "Sign of the Pagan" and Columbia's, "Phffft." In each instance the gross is the amount of revenue accruing to the distributors from U. S. and Canadian exhibitor rentals.)

Feature	Release	Estimate
White Christmas (VistaVision	Par	$12,000,000
Caine Mutiny	Col	8,700,000
Glenn Miller Story	U	7,000,000
Egyptian (CinemaScope)	20th	6,000,000
Rear Window	Par	5,300,000
High and Mighty (C'Scope)	WB	5,200,000
Magnificent Obsession	U	5,000,000
Three Coins in Fountain (C'Scope)	20th	5,000,000
Seven Brides (C'Scope)	M-G	4,750,000
Desiree (C'Scope)	20th	4,500,000
Knights of Round Table (C'Scope)	M-G	4,400,000
Dragnet	WB	4,300,000
Demetrius & Gladiators (C'Scope)	20th	4,250,000
Living It Up	Par	4,250,000
On the Waterfront	Col	4,200,000
Hondo	WB	4,100,000
Long, Long Trailer	M-G	4,000,000
Sabrina	Par	4,000,000
River of No Return (C'Scope)	20th	3,800,000
Broken Lance (C'Scope)	20th	3,800,000
Knock on Wood	Par	3,500,000
Money from Home	Par	3,500,000
Apache	UA	3,250,000
Barefoot Contessa	UA	3,250,000
Beneath 12-Mile Reef (C'Scope)	20th	3,600,000
Garden of Evil (C'Scope)	20th	3,100,000
Elephant Walk	Par	3,000,000
Woman's World (C'Scope)	20th	3,000,000
French Line	RKO	2,900,000
Miss Sadie Thompson	Col	2,900,000
Executive Suite	M-G	2,750,000
Dial M for Murder	WB	2,700,000
Heli & High Water (C'Scope)	20th	2,700,000
King of Khyber Rifles (C'Scope)	20th	2,600,000
Rose Marie (C'Scope)	M-G	2,600,000
Prince Valiant (C'Scope)	20th	2,600,000
Student Prince (C'Scope)	M-G	2,600,000
Living Desert	BV	2,600,000
Betrayed	M-G	2,500,000
Black Widow (C'Scope)	20th	2,500,000
Calamity Jane	WB	2,500,000
The Command	WB	2,500,000
Johnny Guitar	Rep	2,500,000
His Majesty O'Keefe	WB	2,500,000
Eddie Cantor Story	WB	2,300,000
Easy to Love	M-G	2,300,000
Naked Jungle	Par	2,300,000
Brigadoon	M-G	2,250,000
Saskatchewan	U	2,250,000
Susan Slept Here	RKO	2,250,000
Them	WB	2,200,000
Night People (C'Scope)	20th	2,150,000
King Richard (C'Scope)	WB	2,100,000
Carnival Story	RKO	2,000,000
Here Come the Girls	Par	2,000,000
Kiss Me Kate	M-G	2,000,000
All Brothers Valiant	M-G	1,950,000
Lucky Me	WB	1,900,000
Three Sailors and Girl	WB	1,900,000
Valley of Kings	M-G	1,900,000
Francis joins WACS	U	1,900,000
Rogue Cop	M-G	1,800,000
Black Shield Falworth (C'Scope)	U	1,800,000
Walking My Baby	U	1,800,000
Ring of Fear	WB	1,800,000
Vanishing Prairie	BV	1,750,000
Paratrooper	Col	1,750,000
Beau Brummell	M-G	1,750,000
Kettles at Home	U	1,750,000
Black Knight	Col	1,700,000
Hell Below Zero	Col	1,700,000
Johnny Dark	U	1,650,000
Thunder Over Plains	WB	1,600,000
Casanova's Big Night	Par	1,600,000
Mrs. Leslie	Par	1,600,000
Long Wait	UA	1,500,000
Sitting Bull (C'Scope)	UA	1,500,000
Men of Fighting Lady	M-G	1,500,000
Phantom of Rue Morgue	WB	1,450,000
Escape from Bravo	M-G	1,450,000
Boy from Oklahoma	WB	1,400,000
Riding Shotgun	WB	1,400,000
Beachhead	UA	1,400,000
Suddenly	UA	1,400,000
It Should Happen	Col	1,400,000
Secret of Incas	Par	1,400,000
War Arrow	U	1,400,000
Jubilee Trail	Rep	1,300,000
Red Garters	Par	1,300,000
Rhapsody	M-G	1,300,000
Flame and Flesh	M-G	1,300,000
Black Lagoon	U	1,300,000
Tanganyaka	U	1,300,000
Yankee Pasha	U	1,250,000
Appointment in Honduras	RKO	1,150,000
Beat the Devil	UA	1,100,000
Act of Love	UA	1,100,000
Man With Million	UA	1,100,000
Devil's Canyon	RKO	1,100,000
Forever Female	Par	1,100,000
Taza	U	1,100,000
Ride Clear of Diablo	U	1,100,000
Drums Across River	U	1,100,000
Dawn at Socorro	U	1,100,000
Duel in Jungle	WB	1,100,000
Captain's Paradise	UA	1,050,000
Rob Roy	RKO	1,050,000
Human Jungle	AA	1,000,000
Dangerous Mission	RKO	1,000,000
Miami Story	Col	1,000,000
Cease Fire	Par	1,000,000
Border River	U	1,000,000
Rails Into Laramie	U	1,000,000
Black Horse Canyon	U	1,000,000

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STOP for a new movie experience
LOOK for 'LOVE IN THE CITY'
LISTEN to the $ $ $ come rolling in

Some Great Newspapermen

Continued from page 43

tonight." "Lead me to it," I told Woon, and away we went.

There were about 20 present, mostly Americans but a scattering of British and one or two from Berlin. The dinner was superb and the drinks were plentiful. There were no speeches. Let me introduce you to some of them. First there was a man named William Bolitho who had just written a tome called "Murder For Profit." You might pick a copy up in an old bookstore. It's great. Bill died a few months later but his wife had Gilbert Miller produce (posthumously) his last work at the Longacre Theatre. It only lasted a couple of weeks but it gave Pat O'Brien the chance to come to Hollywood after Howard Hughes had seen him in it. Miller got a snug sum for O'Brien's contract but if he waited a couple of weeks he could have had him for free.

Another of my friends present was Arno Dosch Fleurot who was with the N. Y. World. Arno could describe a dinner better than Irvin Cobb. It would make Bill Corum's mouth water if he ever read a column by Fleurot. Moe Koenigsberg read one after a big dinner at the Friars and an hour later he was found seated in Delmonico's attacking a pressed duck, wild rice and a quart of sparkling burgundy. Arno told me that the Grand Duke Boris of Russia was sailing to America on the Olympic. I told him I was taking the same ship. "Throw a party for him," he suggested, "for you will be at sea on Jan. 13, the Russian New Year's." We did that very thing.

Henry (Hank) Waies who wrote "Confirm Or Deny," that Darryl Zanuck later bought, was present in person and he had brought his copy boy as a treat. We sent the kid out later for some cigars. His name was Vincent Sheean. Lincoln Eyre (N. Y. World) sat with Floyd Gibbons. Webb Miller, who died in a London blackout, after braving the horrors of war on the Continent, was seated with Erskine Gwynne who was trying to make a monthly magazine fashioned after our own New Yorker. He called it The Boulevardier. It was a nice piece of work but Paris was not ready for it. After the dinner, Erskine and Basil Woon took me to the famous Quatz' Art Ball at the Paris Opera House. Gwynne was also the secretary to Henri Letellier who owned the Paris Matin and who was a power in the town. That's how we got into see the ball; we sat in Letellier's box.

They poured me on the Olympic a week later and when I recovered consciousness, I was talking with Paul Gerard Smith and I told him about the Grand Duke Boris. He was all for it, as he is a neat trencherman himself. We had no difficulty in getting Boris to consent and on the eve of the 13th we all sat down to supper. We had some celebrities along and they entertained us royally. Edmund Goulding sang "Yes We Have No Bananas," as an opera singer might render the tune. Katherine Flynn, who married Messmore Kendall, owner of the Capitol Theatre (N. Y.), sang and played, and Marie Sheldon, late of the Follies and then the blushing bride of Alan Dwan, danced and sang. She and Alan were on their honeymoon.

Gene Fowler and Damon Runyon

I got back in time to get a wire telling me to report to the RKO studios for a writing job. The day I left New York I had lunch with Gene Fowler. He took me up to his publisher and gave me two books, "Trumpet In The Dust" and "Shoe The Wild Mare." I read them on the train. When I reached the studio, one of the first things I did was to bring the books up to the story department. They had never heard of Gene Fowler. A few months later he wrote "The Great Mouthpiece," and inside of six months he was the highest paid writer on the RKO lot. Funny place Hollywood.

I went back to New York and got myself a job thumping the tub for a brewery besides ghosting a New York column for Bill Farnsworth called 'The Sidewalks of New York. Here are a couple of incidents about the great Damon Runyon.

We were five men and a woman. Seated around a table is a suite at the Hollenden Hotel. We were eating fried chicken and drinking Pommery '23. The town was Cleveland and the month was June. It was hot.

The Republican party was about to disband and go back home. They had nominated a man named Landon from the Sun Flower State to take the fall.

The men all knew each other but the woman was known about a week. She was on the desk of the International News Service at the information stand in the mezzanine of the hotel. She looked like Ingrid Bergman, and I mean Bergman at her best. The host was Joe Connolly, the boss of King Features. Burris Jenkins, the cartoonist, was there, as was Bill Corum, Runyon and myself. It was the last day of the convention and we were cooling ourselves off after a sizzler of a week. Connolly had a head start but Corum, Jenkins and I were rapidly catching up. We were taking a plane back to Manhattan as soon as we could get one. You can have Cleveland and forty points. Connolly was throwing a heavy party before we left.

The Elsa Maxwell of Campbell's

Runyon was the only one who was not drinking and he had eyes only for the blonde. "Now that the convention is over what will you do?", he asked her. "Oh I work in a beauty parlor, I am a beautician," she told him. "You ought to be writing a scandal column," he said, "You would get a lot of tips from listening to the ladies chatter; Wincheli grabs many an item from his connections around beauty parlors." She shook her head slowly, "I never hear a thing," she said. "Not a blessed thing." Runyon sat there drinking in her beauty. She really was a dish. The rest of us were working on the fried chicken and the Pommery; you could see that Damon was on the make. "So you work in a beauty shop and you never hear a thing," he went on. "How come?"

"I am a beautician in a ladies' undertaking parlor—a mortuary," she explained. Runyon gave one gasp and beat it to the door faster than a frightened elk. I didn't see him again until we hit New York.

One night in the early '20s, Runyon asked me to drive him down to the Village. "Got to see a guy about a job," he told me. I dropped him in front of an oldfashioned apartment house and I waited an hour for him to come out. "Been in to see Bill McGeehan," he told me. (Bill was one of the best sports writers in New York). "I offered him a staggering wage but he turned me down." It was something Damon could not understand. "Who do you think spoiled the deal?" he asked me. I shook my head. "Nobody but Brisbane," Runyon said. "He and McGeehan were sitting together the other night at a dinner and Brisbane advised McGeehan never to work for William Randolph Hearst. 'Got a rope around your neck every minute'," he told McGeehan. "The best sports writer in this man's town," Runyon muttered as we slowly drove back to the Friars.

I went down to the barbershop and found Moe Koenigsberg in the chair. He was a fat man who could have been a double for Nero Wolfe. "Hyah Mister Koenigsberg," I said (he was the only one I mistered in the joint). "How is that deal to buy the Denver Post coming along." I asked him. (Mr. Hearst was dickering to buy the Denver Post from Bonfils & Tammen and Koenigsberg was acting as agent). "It's off," Koenigsberg told me. "They published a story Mr. Hearst didn't like so he called the deal dead after I had been working on it for six months. I don't feel so good about it." "How come," I asked him. "I arranged the deal and was to have $700,000 commission fee from Bonfils," mourned Mr. Koenigsberg. "Wouldn't that make you mad?"

"It certainly would," I told him as I got into the chair.

Olivia for 'Ivory'?

Hollywood.

Gottfried Reinhardt bought the film rights "The Tower Of Ivory," original by Rudolfo Fonseca. He's negotiating with Olivia de Havilland for the femme lead.

Pic is slated for production in Italy late in 1955.

Niven's Romulus Return

Hollywood.

David Niven returns to Romulus to star in film produced by James and John Woolf in England next summer. Vehicle is now being selected for Niven.

Currently in Metro's "King's Thief." These starred last year for Romulus in "Carrington, V.C." which title was switched to "Court Martial" for U.S. Distrib.

Noah Webster

Continued from page 7

eye on was "oatmeal" which Noah Webster defined as "Meal made of oats, or porridge made of such meal." The Doctor's version was a little different. To him, oatmeal was, "A cereal eaten by animals in England—and human beings in Scotland."

If Johnson, who gave out with the first English dictionary, can disagree with Webster, who came up with the first American dictionary, why can't I disagree with both of them—and all the others who take it upon themselves to state or set forth the meaning of words, phrases, etc.?

My book will be called:

HARRY RUBY'S
New Standard Universal Comprehensive Desk Dictionary of the English Language

(The following are only a few of the words and phrases that will go into the book. In some cases, as you will see, I have employed the medium of verse for clearer definition.)

Advice

A thing sought by all, but taken by none, including the one who gives it.

A Good Loser

1. The thing we like to believe the other feller is.
2. There ain't no such thing!

Conscience

A fear of being found out (and nothing else but!).

Cynicism

1. A euphemism for realism.
2. Seeing things as they really are, insted of the way we'd like them to be.

Death

1. The reward for living.
2. The undisturbed sleep of innocent childhood.
3. This creed he chooses for his text:

No one is better than the next.
So, death is, quite ironically,
The only true democracy.

Disillusionment

Going back for another look at your childhood sweetheart. (See: Leonard Merrick's "Conrad in Quest of His Youth").

Foolhardiness

An action or venture that fools and youths mistake for courage.

Happiness

The estate of an idiot.

Hollywood

A place way out west where quite a few men are men.

Modernism

A columnist giving his readers the exact measurements of a glamor gal's mammary glands.

Perfectionism

A thing prefectionists think is the same as perfection—but it isn't.

Perpetual Motion

1. Eddie Cantor
2. Irving Berlin
3. Winston Churchill
4. Bob Hope
5. Bob Hope's writers
6. Sophie Tucker.

Phallic

By an odd coincidence, Phallic,
Is a perfect rhyme for Malik.

Poetry

A form of expression for them and those
Who can't express themselves in prose.

Politeness

A form of behavior often mistaken for good manners.

Power

Power corrupts, as was said so astutely;
Absolute power corrupts absolutely.

Shakespeare

The Babe Ruth of literature.

Sympathy

Subconscious self-pity.

Lexicographer's note: I did not bother with diacritical marks, pronunciation, and parts of speech. Maybe I shouldn't have bothered writing it altogether.

Utopia

Any place where there are no people.

Video's Inroads on Legit

Continued from page 27

plays has made it more difficult for the touring attraction, which must necessarily charge increased prices to meet the high cost of touring in order to live. Yet it is apparent that the American public will always turn out for the genuine star in a good play, as witness the case with Deborah Kerr who is breaking road records in "Tea And Sympathy." However, the difficulties of finding such stars who are willing to go on the road are ever increasing. It is happily still the case that when popular theatre personalities can be seen in three dimensions in the living theatre, they can always be counted upon to receive the support of the public which seeks entertainment at the highest level.

Furthermore, during the present season, television is paying at least part of its debt back to the theatre in the person of stars in legitimate plays who have greatly increased their audience and boxoffice by appearing on the television networks. Thus, contrary to the case with motion pictures where performers have been tied up on an exclusive basis for as long as seven years at a time to the motion pictures companies, the stage actors who appear on television and the television actors who appear on the stage, are mutually helping one another and strengthening the popularity of both media with the public. Similarly, the younger playwrights who have been largely supported by television, are now rapidly filling the ranks of successful theatre writers. Perhaps the best example this season is N. Richard Nash, whose outstanding play, "The Rainmaker," is one of the few authentic stage hits in New York, and owed its inception to a television play. Thus, it follows the path of other stage successes such as "Dial M For Murder," which, while written originally as a play, made its first debut in television. That this pattern is likely to be followed is shown by the number of other writers for television, such as Paddy Chayefsky, Robert Anderson and Horton Foote, who have written for a number of years either for radio, as was the case with Anderson, or for radio and television as with some of the other writers.

$3,000,000 Road B.O.

Because of the impact of television on the road, the importance of the subscription audience which has now been made available to the entire theatre by the Theatre Guild-American Theatre Society has become increasingly evident. While very little publicity has been given to the fact, this organization is the largest theatre ticket-selling body in the United States. It sells to the road-public over $3,000,000 worth of tickets a year, and this either at boxoffice prices, or at a slight reduction. Thus no ticket speculation is possible, and the tickets are actually mailed to the subscribers who receive their regular seats for each of the plays of the series. The underwriting provided by the subscription system, while not necessary for the so-called "smash hits," has made it possible for several plays to go on tour last season and this season, which otherwise would have folded on short notice but for the subscription support. The theatre, of course, cannot live only by "smash hits," and it is here where the TG-ATS, in collaboration with the Council of the Living Theatre, has enabled many provincial theatres, which would otherwise have folded, to remain in operation and thus to enable the "smash hits" and plays generally to be given a hearing in a chain of theatres throughout the country.

Broadway Always The Mecca

Whatever the conditions may be on the road, the New York theatre is again flourishing, with theatres crowded with the incoming attractions, while there is a waiting line for plays which have not yet found Broadway playhouses available. And this theatrical excitement is due not merely to the quality of the plays, but to the fact that New York is becoming increasingly thronged with visitors who avidly seek entertainment—and find it in its highest form in the theatre. Thus the spectacle of well-to-do patrons from all over the U. S. visiting the metropolis for three days to three weeks, and taking in all the plays, is more and more the pattern of today's New York theatregoing, while the New Yorker who rebels against competing in price brackets with such visitors, tends to wait towards the end of the run of the "smash hit" plays, when he can purchase seats at boxoffice prices.

A plan to bring visitors from other cities by buses, planes or trains to New York to spend some days is expected to meet with success, and will be particularly valuable for those towns which do not now receive touring companies. However, impact of these theatre parties in cities where the touring companies are presently in the habit of going, is yet to be determined.

Old Cry: Where Are The New Writers?

But in spite of the fanfare and excitement of the New York theatre, some signs of discontent are evident in the midst of its pageantry. And the same cry is heard both in London and New York: "Where are the younger playwrights"? That they exist is definitely the case, but when they are unwilling to write for the present Broadway market, which tends to place entertainment above thought, and the easy laugh above the uneasy tear, the young playwright with something to say and who does not rely on scandal or sensationalism, finds it more difficult than ever to secure a hearing.

Nor has the off-Broadway theatre contributed to help the young playwright as much as was hoped, largely because the interest of those behind these spontaneous efforts seem more concerned with acting talent than with writing talent. However, it must be remembered that some excellent writing work was seen this year in off-Broadway plays such as "The Bullfight" by Leslie Stevens. If the off-Broadway theatre can become a writer's theatre, as was the case with the Provincetown Playhouse, it will provide an antidote to Broadway which might well result in a theatre renaissance such as took place in the twenties.

For the rest, playwrights who are not actually writing in the popular vein, or whose early efforts make it difficult to raise the $60,000 to $80,000 necessary for the production of their plays, are finding an increasing outlet in well-produced tryouts in summer theatres. Here the Westport Country Playhouse has led the way with the production of several new plays by young writers each season. This policy will be continued at Westport to an increasing extent, and also in many other summer theatres.

Nurture The Playwright!

The young author and the young director, finding the main entrances to Broadway bolted and barred, are finding their way in by the side-doors in this way. Another rather surprising outgrowth of the present high cost of production in New York is found in the number of American "tryouts" which are being done in England, with the idea that these can later on be brought to the United States. Among these may be mentioned "The Wooden Dish," while a new version of Thornton Wilder's "The Matchmaker," with Ruth Gordon, is now a success in London, and a new play by Robert Thom, "The Minotaur," is being tried out in London in April.

I doubt if it is sufficiently recognized that the talent of play writing is an extremely rare one. There are over 160,000,000 people in this country and over 50,000,000 in England. Yet in this country it would be possible to count the first-class playwrights on the fingers of both hands, and while the number of playwrights per capita is greater in England, it is still amazingly small. This is the reason why it becomes increasingly important for our critics to treat the works of playwrights with respect, recognizing how difficult is this medium, and what a rare bird is a good playwright. I feel that if this fact were more generally recognized there would be less of a tendancy to dismiss contemptously in a few minutes on the typewriter, the work of writers which has taken anywhere from six months to a year to produce, and in its best form constitutes one of the rarest of human endeavors.

The World Over...

EXHIBITORS STEP AHEAD with ALLIED ARTISTS

In Lima, Ohio... or Lima, Peru... you'll find theaters playing Allied Artists pictures—and audiences enjoying them.

We like to think we are bringing more than entertainment to the many thousands of communities throughout the world where our pictures are shown. We like to feel that we are helping to efface the imaginary differences which often separate peoples more than physical boundaries. Motion pictures do that. Look in on any audience, anywhere, and you'll see what we mean.

"THE WARRIORS"
CINEMASCOPE

"THE ANNAPOLIS STORY"
COLOR BY TECHNICOLOR

"GOD'S ANGRY MAN"

"SHOTGUN"
COLOR BY TECHNICOLOR

"THE BIG COMBO"

"TARGET EARTH"

"CRY VENGEANCE"

"THE BOB MATHIAS STORY"

"TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT"
COLOR BY TECHNICOLOR

Good Crop of Bloopers

Continued from page 3

overlook the antics of the Chicago deejay who went on an oscillatory marathon binge with a Hollywood starlet for more than 120 seconds on his television program. Charged with vulgarity, coarseness and bad taste, the platter-spinning busser panted that he had no guilty conscience. "I wanted to see whether tv audiences are more broadminded than movie audiences," he pontificated. "I can't see that it was in poor taste." However, station officials took a considerably dimmer view of the lip-hugging pageant and forthwith kissed him off with his sacking notice.

The historian, furthermore, peering with notebook and glasses into aerial show biz, will regard the night of Oct. 15 as epochal indeed in the history of mankind. The transcendent event occurred when Steve Allen interviewed Max Liebman. The tv producer revealed during the interview that he came from *Brooklyn*—and, unbelievable as it may appear to cynics of such matters, there was complete silence in the studio. Not one single member of the audience shouted hurrah! Not one single ticket holder in the house clapped his mitts! Not a patriot in the parish stamped his feet in approval! Never before in the metropolitan history going back to the founding of the old city of Breukelen, more than 300 years ago, had such a thing happened.

Unfettered scholars of both the fifth and sixth estates will also note with moderate dismay the Mario Lanza appearance on the Shower of Stars video program dubbed subsequently the Shower of Shellac because the singer waiked off with a considerable bundle of green for pretending to warble while a soundman spun an old recording of the artist in the rear of the house.

Another chapter in the annals of pejorative art as practiced on the airlanes was penned during the recent political campaign when the audio-visual audience gandering Vice-Prexy Nixon, heard at the end of his speech the cussing words: "Who the hell did that?" Ordinarily such minor profanity might well go unnoticed but when one assumes that a national public figure uttered the swear words, telephone switchboards light up like pinball machines scoring 20,000 points, and there's swashbuckling hell to pay. Nixon, the solon, in this instance, denied uttering the sentence. "It wasn't me," he insisted. "I use no such language." Politicos in the party blamed a member of the tv technical crew for the crack.

Any attempt at anthologizing the year's outstanding guffaws on audience participation programs must, of necessity, include such Lulus as these: the young woman on the Red Benson "Take a Number" show who was asked: "What was the population in the United States in 1790?" Highly annoyed at the question, the gal retorted: "Well, really, I'm not that old." John Reed King asked a contestant: "Are you in New York on your honeymoon?" "No," she replied, "this is just a pleasure trip."

For some unfathomable reason, the word honeymoon produces a smirk and a leer as evidenced time and again on so many of our audience participation affairs. One of the constant leer-producers appears to be the aforementioned Steve Allen. On one occasion he praised a young man in the audience for possessing a deep-throated voice. "Use it much?" Allen pumped. "Not lately," was the reply. "I'm on my honeymoon." The narrow minds watching the show immediately reached for pencil and paper and dashed off a puritanical protest to the FCC.

Also, this was the year of anatomical references to "Fanny," the Broadway musical, and, as was expected, it headed the indelicate hit parade for many months. Numerous deejays sounded off with the dull line, "Here's Eddie Fisher's 'Fanny.'" But the best verbal movement of the year, according to savants of the slip, was undoubtedly made by the raffish Arthur Godfrey when he boo-booed the brand name Snow Crop, and the venerable John Gambling joined the boner band by bragging: "I always delve into these products before I tell you about them. This morning I'm going to talk about bloomers." More chic saleish stuff was served up on "What's My Line?," an ideal setup for this type of supposed howler. When a diaper salesman pranced into the studio, one of the masked panelists queried him: "Is there an end product involved?"

Hardly a day goes by without an announcer fluffing a weather report. The choice forecast of the year came from the announcer who said the weather bureau had predicted a "clear Saturday, followed by Sunday late tonight. Ned Calmer, the CBS newsman, was immediately tapped for membership in the blooper fraternity when he referred to certain information coming from a high "horse" in Panmunjom. He was asked to take a seat next to the former news analyst and fluff artist who attributed a hot Washington news story to a "usually reliable White House souse."

Also, among the gargle-garbled gems of the year were these pearls of pear-shaped wisdom:

The announcer who introduced Dennis James as "Jennis Dames."

Mel Allen (on changing pitchers twice in an inning) who said: "Nothing unusual about this—it's just a rare thing to see."

The announcer who introduced Ham Fisher as the creator of "Joe Falooka."

Jinx Falkenburg, who thought her mike was dead and bawled out her guest for opening his kisser during a commercial. "Dammitt, don't interrupt me during my commercials," she snapped.

Jimmy Powers who, upon learning that his guest hailed from Indiana, said: "Indiana is one of my favorite towns."

The New York disk jock who waxed about the "music by George Gershwin and lyrics by his lovely wife, Ira."

The WMGM announcer who urged his listeners: "Send for your copy of 'The Book of Health.' Pay the postman nothing. Read it for 10 days, and if at the end of that time you don't like it, send it back, *as thousands have done!*"

The announcer who wanted his listeners to meet "the newted nose analyst."

The quizmaster who asked the contestant the difference between amnesia and magnesia. "I guess the guy with amnesia doesn't know where he is going while the mugg with magnesia does," he snickered.

All-Time Top Grossers

Continued from page 59

62.	Green Years (M-G) (1946)	4,600,000
63.	Anchors Away (M-G) (1945)	4,500,000
64.	Bachelor and Bobbysoxer (RKO) (1947)	4,500,000
65	Easy to Wed (M-G) (1946)	4,500,000
66.	Four Horsemen (M-G) (1921)	4,500,000
67.	Great Caruso (M-G) (1951)	4,500,000
68.	Paleface (Par) (1945)	4,500,000
69.	Random Harvest (M-G) (1942)	4,500,000
70.	Road to Rio (Par) (1948)	4,500,000
71.	Road to Utopia (Par) (1945)	4,500,000
72.	Thrill of a Romance (M-G) (1945)	4,500,000
73.	Till Clouds Roll By (M-G) (1945)	4,500,000
74.	Valley of Decision (M-G) (1945)	4,500,000
75.	Desiree (20th) (1954)	4,500,000
76.	Easter Parade (M-G) (1948)	4,450,000
77.	Cheaper by the Dozen (20th) (1950)	4,425,000
78.	Two Years Before Mast (Par) (1946)	4,400,000
79.	Knights of Round Table (M-G) (1954)	4,400,000
80.	Red River (UA) (1948)	4,350,000
81.	Hucksters (M-G) (1947)	4,350,000
82.	Harvey Girls (M-G) (1946)	4,350,000
83.	Stage Door Canteen (UA) (1943)	4,350,000
84.	Lost Weekend (Par) (1946)	4,300,000
85.	Sailor Beware (Par) (1952)	4,300,000
86.	Dragnet (WB) (1954)	4,300,000
87.	Cinderella (RKO) (1950)	4,275,000
88.	Adventure (M-G) (1946)	4,250,000
89.	Saratoga Trunk (WB) (1946)	4,250,000
90.	Streetcar Named Desire (WB) (1951)	4,250,000
91.	Demetrius and Gladiators (20th) (1954)	4,250,000
92.	Living It Up (Par) (1954)	4,250,000
93.	30 Seconds Over Tokyo (RKO) (1954)	4,225,000
94.	Hollywood Canteen (WB) (1944)	4,200,000
95.	Three Musketeers (M-G) (1948)	4,200,000
96.	Weekend at Waldorf (M-G) (1945)	4,200,000
97.	On the Waterfront (Col) (1954)	4,200,000
98.	Father of the Bride (M-G) (1950)	4,150,000
99.	Joan of Arc (RKO) (1949)	4,100,000
100.	Johnny Belinda (WB) (1948)	4,100,000
101.	I Was a Male War Bride (20th) (1949)	4,100,000
102.	Margie (20th) (1946)	4,100,000
103.	Mother Wore Tights (20th) (1947)	4,100,000
104.	African Queen (UA) (1952)	4,100,000
105.	Snake Pit (20th) (1949)	4,100,000
106.	Hondo (WB) (1954)	4,100,000
107.	Cass Timberlane (M-G) (1948)	4,050,000
108.	State Fair (20th) (1945)	4,050,000
109.	American in Paris (M-G) (1951)	4,000,000
110.	Moon Is Blue (UA) (1953)	4,000,000
111.	Ben Hur (M-G) (1926)	4,000,000
112.	Dolly Sisters (20th) (1945)	4,000,000
113.	Emperor Waltz (Par) (1948)	4,000,000
114.	Holiday in Mexico (M-G) (1946)	4,000,000
115.	Jumping Jacks (Par) (1952)	4,000,000
116.	Kid from Brooklyn (RKO) (1946)	4,000,000
117.	Night and Day (WB) (1946)	4,000,000
118.	Reap the Wild Wind (Par) (1942)	4,000,000
119.	Sands of Iwo Jima (Rep) (1950)	4,000,000
120.	Singing Fool (WB) (1928)	4,000,000
121.	Smoky (20th) (1946)	4,000,000
122.	Ziegfeld Follies (M-G) (1946)	4,000,000
123.	Long, Long Trailer (M-G) (1954)	4,000,000
124.	Sabrina (Par) (1954)	4,000,000

Carl Sandburg

Continued from page 3

rities eating celery. The sound man, Tom Perkins, is a born Tarheel, felt at home with the Great Smokies in sight, and cried for joy when he got a perfect reproduction of the roaring wheels of a Southern Railway freight train and the long deep moan of its engine whistle a quarter mile away.

At noon each day all pitched in on a smorgasbord Mrs. Sandburg had fixed on a big dining room table, not forgetting goat milk and goat cheese fresh from the farm. It was like having a crew of "thrashers" who deserved the best the farm could give. Murrow and Friendly stayed three days, Mack two days more, and Tom Perkins on a Sunday afternoon took down two hours of my fairly well forgotten songs. Murrow is a great reporter, interviewer, current historian. It is a new kind of biography they are fooling around with. They capture far more than a forgotten football in a hushed snow. My impressions of the week were given to Tom Perkins' tape recorder in an improvised and rambling song titled The Photographic-Microphonic Blues.

For their time and trouble the Liberty Boys took back to CBS in New York 6½ hours of film. Their problem is what to do with it. They used 27 minutes of it in a "See It Now" telecast on Oct. 5. That leaves six hours and three minutes of film which they are viewing and taking under consideration. I saw Fred Friendly two hours in a cutting room with trained and bright young women as assistants. I asked one of them, "When you make a mistake and Mr. Friendly yells at you what do you do?" She laughed her answer, "We yell back at him!"

Saroyan Does Commercial

Continued from page 4

cause the play is a vaudeville show with a story.

The weekly VARIETY, which is what I am supposed to be thinking about, chronicles the everlasting contest between boredom and invention. With the arrival of television, invention appears to have moved far past necessity, so that it is almost impossible not to become bored with the very means by which to avoid being boredom.

In short, in seeking to escape one order of boredom, one is plunged headlong into another.

This applies also to films of course, where the new boredom is intensified because it costs money to be exposed to films.

It applies to the legitimate theatre, too.

It has *always* applied to nature and reality themselves, too.

But as art, as the inventions for the escape of boredom fail, nature and reality must be restored as valid dispellers of boredom.

Thus, instead of looking at television or films, and instead of going to the theatre, great numbers of people may escape boredom by looking at nothing in particular, or in looking at anything carefully and directly.

Built-In Variety Cast

The Italian-American Nick is in the play because he owns and operates the joint—for a living. Joe, the Irish-American loafer with money, is there for an assortment of reasons, not the least of which is that he feels at home there. Kitty, the Polish-American girl; Willie, the Assyrian-American marble-game player; Krupp the German-American cop; the Arab workman; the Greek-American newsboy; Kit Carson, the old Indian fighter; Wesley, the Negro-American pianoplayer, and Harry, the natural-born comedian and dancer—they are all there for good reasons of their own, and for good reasons of my own—namely, to make a lively play. There are songs, dances, harmonica solos, monologs, jukebox music, one-act plays, toys, tall tales, lies, truth, and miscellaneous surprises—all mixed together to the end that no one in the theatre is likely to be cheated out of his expectancy not to be bored.

Now, boredom invented variety, including art in all of its forms. Boredom invented cards, chess, checkers, backgammon, dominoes, athletic games, wrestling, boxing, song, dance, story-telling, playwriting, play acting, play watching, and all other things of variety, including and perhaps especially booze-drinking, to use an oldfashioned term. The impulse and need to escape or to avoid boredom perpetuated variety in all of its forms. A people who can't be bored can't invent.

Thus, inasmuch as we have television, who needs television? Obviously, the beer, cigaret and automobile manufacturers, whose boredom appears to be solely statistical and monetary.

Inasmuch as we have movies, who needs movies? Obviously the manufacturers of movies, whose boredom is with truth itself—that is to say, with life itself, and with the limitless variety and potential of truth and reality.

Inasmuch as we have plays, poetry and prose, who needs them? Obviously, those who make them, whose boredom is with boredom itself, in all of its preposterous variety.

Inasmuch as we have whiskey distillers, who needs whiskey? I do.

All I started out to say was that in "The Time of Your Life" for 1955 I was required to find a good name to replace Liberty, and that I settled for VARIETY.

And the first thing I knew I had got tangled up in all that stuff about mice and microbes. That's what happens when you write for fame or nothing. Now, when you write for money, it's another story entirely. It may lack variety, but it won't lack plot.

As long as I've gone off the deep end, though, I may as well go the whole distance, and as the fellow said, "Think or Thwim."

Is there anything better to read than VARIETY? Yes, there is, but not *much* better, and you have to look.

Is there *enough* variety in VARIETY? No, there isn't. There isn't in the big businesses considered and there isn't in the style of the considering, so to put it.

It is unimaginative and even unrealistic of VARIETY not to consider, along with the big business of television, radio, films, agencies, such things as baseball, prizefights, horseraces, and anything else that is nationally diverting—spy hunts, bomb and fear hysterics, investigations of intellectuals, investigations of investigators, and elections—to mention a few.

For it is a fact that the entertainment world is not quite as entertaining as the other world. You know the one I mean. And of course they overlap, so that professional actors hardly ever turn in performances that are anywhere near as good as the performances of those who are supposed to be anything but actors. The leading characters of the nation appear to have been cast with no concern for cost, the play appears to have been written by a boy who really understands his business, and it appears to have been directed by a genius who knows how to combine the best elements and most satisfying qualities of the horror story and the farce.

So how can VARIETY ignore the real world on the theory that it isn't quite as frightening or entertaining as the make-believe world?

The thing I like best about VARIETY, however, is the emphasis on The Big—big deals, big sums of money, big names, big everything—and what have you got?

Something very small, like Mrs. Napoleon's poodle, but small in a big way, with everybody appropriately hysterical and overflowing with show business love about it.

The next best thing I like in VARIETY is the longevity of everybody in spite of wars, strikes, riots, panics, bankruptcies, anxieties, epidemics, crop failures, and water shortages. In 30 years no circus performer has died under the age of 80.

That is awfully heartening.

Safari With Peck

Continued from page 5

was the Big Game hunter's mission. He would stand just off camera, his highpowered rifle at his shoulder, eyes gimleted on the sights following the course of the beast ready to do him in if he didn't follow his cues.

Peck and Preston, quite naturally, used their off time getting in some target practice by throwing beer cans in a nearby and slow-flowing river, then plunking away at them.

They could never get the Big Game hunter to enter this playful period, he professing quite grandly an aversion to anything but living targets.

No amount of wheedling would change him either.

Somehow everybody lived through this film's production, and they were finally packing up. Some ammunition was left over, the company was paid off including the Big Game hunter who wanted living targets only, so Greg and Bob Preston took the last of the beer cans, the ammo and the guns and went to the river bank for a last bit of fireworks.

After much persuasion, they got the Big Game hunter to join them.

He raised his rifle, called for the first beer can, which Preston splashed out some 15 feet from the bank. He, the living target specialist, took interminable and careful aim, then pulled the trigger.

The can was untouched. He tried again. Missed.

He tried on 22 beer cans, to be exact, and they would all be floating yet except that they must be rusted through by now.

Peck sat down on a rotting stump, and recalled with great vividness his days in the face of the rampaging lions. He even emptied some more beer cans trying to rid himself of the shakes.

He told me about this one recent Christmas Eve in the Palace Hotel bar at St. Moritz, and the only lions in Switzerland are on tourist type hotel stickers.

"In any future picture with lions," he resolved, "I will assume they have sharp teeth, but I will not assume marksmanship until shown."

Whereupon, he emptied several more beer cans, and that's probably one New Year's resolution he will always keep!

LOOMING BIG ON THE BOXOFFICE HORIZON!

DISTRIBUTORS CORPORATION OF AMERICA!

Paris Revisited; Now & Then

Continued from page 5

there now, but the main floor is a movie house.

On the corner is the Dome, which was always the Main Street of American writers and painters in Paris. Here, in the old days, you were bound to meet everyone sooner or later. Pappa Jambon, the *patron*, is no longer there, but the place is full of happy and eager young folks talking of writing, painting, music, the arts. And mostly (now as then) just talking. With this difference. In those days there was always a liberal sprinkling of the famous names of the world. Today, no one. At least, no one recognizable to these tired old eyes. Adolph and Mura Dehn are not here, nor is Stuart Davis, nor Ezra Pound, nor Bob McAlmon, nor old man Titus with his Russian wolf hounds, nor Ludwig Lewisohn with his tears and his Thelma, nor Sam Putnam, nor Abraham Lincoln Gillespie, nor Ray Mann and his Kiki. (But Mann is around. I saw him wandering along the Boul Mich the other day. I was afraid to talk to him, afraid I might not like the answers to some of the questions I wanted to ask him. Leave it that way. Let me wander. And wonder.)

Montparnasse

It was at the Dome that I first met (though they were not steadies, they were passersthrough) Sherwood Anderson, Bennet Cerf, Leo Gershoy, Marc Connelly, Horace Liveright, Bob Brown, Matthew Josephson, Marc Blitzstein, Hendrik van Loon, Eugene O'Neill, Erskine Gwynne, Abel Green, Morrie Werner, Gene Lyons, Konrad Bercovici, Octavus Roy Cohen, Sholem Asch and Helen Tamiris. Among many others. Now there's only Tom Van Dycke and an American pinball machine.

Across the street is the Rotonde, where the Europeans used to congregate, Miro, Leger, Ehrenburg, Jolas, etc. It's pretty well deserted these days—and the piece de resistance (which may explain why it's deserted) is a genuine U.S. jukebox.

The Select, a block further down, where Harold Stearns held up the bar with his constantly flowing coupe of champagne, is still jumping, but with all new faces. Kay Boyle and her flowing blue cape are gone; so is the hearty laughter of Djuna Barnes. Pierre Loving — whatever happened to him? And where is Lillian Fiske?

The Coupole, across the street, is new and nouveau-riche, with myriad neon; I won't even look in. The Falstaff, Ward Morehouse's favorite Paris bar, still caters to bridge-players and alimony widows. The Closerie des Lilas, beloved haunt of Ford Madox Ford, Richard Aldington, and the Britishers ,is very fancy now. Very expensive. No more pool table. And no more artists.

In the Odeon sector, Shakespeare & Co.'s bookstore no longer exists, but Sylvia Beach, who first had the courage and intelligence to publish Joyce's "Ulysses" there, is no longer present. (Incidentally, just to show that even a mugg can be sentimental, I stopped in front of the apartment house where James Joyce lived so many terrible years of anxiety, removed my hat, and spent five moments of silent homage.) The apartment upstairs, where George Antheil composed what was for a minute America's finest modern music, is occupied by French people. The Cochon de Lait is still a great restaurant, but F. Scott Fitzgerald doesn't hide and scowl in the rooms overhead any longer. And Gertrude Stein doesn't walk the streets at night in this neighborhood and talk to anyone and everyone, as she used to. But her faithful Alice Toklas is still around somewhere; she just published—don't gasp—a cookbook!

St. Germain de Pres is, as it always was, a popular hangout for students and the gay set; the Cafe des Deux Magots is still the focal point.

The rue de la Huchette, made famous by Elliot Paul's book, "The Last Time I Saw Paris," has lost its charm and quality. It is full of clipjoints, bellydancers, pitfalls. And the current VARIETY mugg lives there, wondering what all us A.K.'s, are weeping about.

The Opera sector is pretty well unchanged, still pure Parisian, with a heavy American accent. Everyone still gathers at the American Express for mail, etc., and everyone window shops in the many little stores. And everyone sits, at least a few minutes at the Cafe de la Paix. The Scribe Hotel, which was once the hangout of top American showmen, doesn't get that biz any more, and sort of wonders whether Al Woods, Morris Gest, and the others wouldn't still be going there. Harry's New York Bar is still what it always was, a noisy American jump joint. The big hotels, the Ritz, the Crillon, the Meurice, are as ever, and the Ritz bar still attracts heavy play. Maxim's, of course, is unchanged; ditto Ciro's. But the big American play seems to have moved uptown to the Champs-Elysees sector, where the George V has become more solidly eentrenched, not only as the top Paris hotel, but as a gathering place of the clans.

In passing, just a word of mourning for the Champs-Elysees. This was a beautiful, elegant street. Now it's a neon nightmare. It seems to this reporter to be the only street or sector in Paris that has lost its native characteristics.

Newshawks

The Paris Herald has moved out of its wonderful rickety building back of Les Halles and has gone uptown, to the Champs-Elysees, complete with fancy offices and elevators that work. Eric Hawkins is still in charge, which is as it should be, and the place reeks with lonesome ghosts. The Chicago Tribune has passed on; so has the Paris Times, But the ghosts of newspapermen who worked on the three papers, quite properly, hang around the Herald's copy desk. Some great newspapermen worked on these papers: Rex Smith, Larry Blochman, James Thurber, Will Barber, Charles Wertenbacher, Bert Andrews, Larry Dame, Whit Burnett, Elliot Paul, John Hewlett, Martha Foley, Bob Stern, Evea Brown, Johnny White, Longston Moffett, Jules Frantz, Ed Taylor, Al Laney, May Birkhead, Allan Finn—many others. Some of them are dead, some have gone on to more lucrative fields. The only newspapermen on the Herald now who were here 25 years ago are Tommy Thompson, who is in the slot, and Bob Sage, who's doing a travel column.

There are not many American foreign correspondents who were around in the twenties and thirties left in Paris. Hank Wales is still at the old stand repping the Chi Trib, Warren Lansing is still with the N.Y. Times, and Bert Parkins is still with Women's Wear. That's about all. Jay Allen, Bill Bird, Jimmy James, Leland Stowe, Joe Phillips and all the others have moved on.

Hollywood-On-The-Seine

The movie colony, in those days, was just about getting started in Paris. Bob Kane was here producing multilinguals for Paramount; Al Kaufman came over to build the finest movie house in town (the Paramount, still doing well, but with French management); the French made an occasional movie, with Rene Clair the only one making an impression; and the Germans dropped in regularly to sneer and boast about their wonderful UFA product. It was about this time that Jesse Lasky came over, with much ado, to sign an unknown Frenchman named Maurice Chevalier. Adolphe Menjou hit all the front pages by getting married here. Joe von Sternberg came through town en route to Berlin to produce a movie called "Blue Angel" with Emil Jannings and an unknown girl named Marlene Dietrich. But French pic biz was not much, and French pic showmen were not much. And now the town is full of French producers, directors, technicians, all busy, all working hard, all proud of their industry, and all (to me) unknown. But they are obviously a source not to be bypassed.

Radio was in its infancy in America then, and virtually unknown here.

I remember George Jessel coming over to Paris for his first visit and weeping copiously about "that awful stuff" going out free over the airwaves, which "has ruined all show biz" Well, he's acclimated himself to it, I gather. It's a big business now, there as here. Ditto television, which was just a dream then, insofar as ordinary laymen were concerned. This reporter cannot tell much about either the television or radio fields. One thing is quickly obvious, however. There are nowhere near the number of receiving sets around as there are at home and neither field has come anywhere near to making a dent into this potential. This is not due to the non-commercialism of programs. It is due to the fact that receiving sets on this side of the ocean are about twice or three times as costly as they are at home.

Television - wise, incidentally, there seem to be a fantastic lot of "foreigners" in or around the edges of the field. This may be erroneous, being a quick-look by a johnny-come-lately. But the impression insists that there are an extraordinariiy large number of refugees, either from Hitlerism or quotaism, involved in the making or manufacturing of "le film pilote". Let's put it this way: it is not an organized, or stable, industry, at the moment.

Legit

Which brings us to the theatre. The theatre in Paris has been healthy and active for many years, and still is. It is correct to say that there are only three important theatre centers in the world: New York, London, and Paris. At the moment, the theatre here is passing through a dull stage. There are 44 plays current, of which this notator has seen about 20; maybe he just ain't lucky, because nothing he saw intrigued him, though a couple of revues were fine.

More than half the theatre available here consists of classics or translations. There are plays current by Oscar Wilde, Bernard Shaw, Peter Ustinov, Somerset Maugham, Shakespeare, Paul Green, Graham Greene, and Arthur Miller, among the American and English translations, which is about par for the course, and about the percentage it used to be. Greene's "Living Room" is probably the biggest hit of the season. Most talk among the cognoscenti is about a play by Ugo Betti, Italian, called "Irene, Innocent", which is allegedly magnificent drama. This semi-pundit found it dull and unbelievable. In fact, I have found nothing here worth recommending (which is the way I felt about French theatre 25 years ago). The dramas are verbose; the comedies are frail; the musicals oldfashioned. But the big revues—ah! The Folies Bergeres is still wonderful, and the Casino de Paris, at the moment, has the best show of its long and exciting career. Great big slabs of flash and nudity, with no holds barred. It is nice to know that this has not changed. Tell Yanks to see the show at the Casino if they see nothing else.

Vaudeville still lives here, of course. The Empire was the big vaude house a quarter of a century ago and it is about to go back to vaude after a try with musical comedy. The Apollo is, at the moment, the ace house, and the Bobino, the favorite; typically French and the customers pack the joint because they love it. And show it. A goodly sprinkling of the acts, then as now, are American. Noble Sissle's Band was a frequent favorite then; now it's Lionel Hampton's Band. Many acts are called "Soandso Et Sa Partner", or "Soandso Et Les Girls." They still love to sprinkle a few English or American words around. And why not? We do the same at home in reverse.

Vaudeville

Saloons? Sorry. A guy who admits he doesn't like night clubs is usually left to sit in the corner and not spoken to around VARIETY. The fact remains, I never was a bottle baby. But I know that the Lido is the flash joint, just as it was in the days of long ago. And there are dozens of small dives of every size and description. Plus, one new thing. There are now dozens of joints that feature "Le Strip-tease a l'Americaine".

Restaurants are still wonderful, of course. Most of the old spots are still here: Tour d'Argent, Fouquet's, etc. They're expensive. You keep hearing on all sides how expensive life is in Paris. The fact is that the exchange was in our favor 5 years ago and is in the Frenchman's favor today. But—don't let it get you down. If you don't mind using a paper napkin if you don't mind hunting around dark corners—it is still possible to eat magnificent food at a very low cost.

Which is a remainder. Borrah Minevitch has just bought himself a sort of restaurant-saloon-hangout. Quite lovely, but not in the 'cheap' category. Minevitch, a frequent participant on the Empire and Casino bills in those days, has gone strictly Parisian. He dabbles. He produces films, he revamps real estate,, he recently bought a tailor shop! Another American who adopted Paris at just about that time, Jack Forrester, former hoofer, made some films, then turned to film production, dubbing and—has turned into a financier, complete with Homburg and flower in the lapel. Irving Marks, who has been living in Paris at least 200 years, is still trying to learn French in the confines of the Continental Hotel, where no one speaks a word of anything but English. And it's a wonderful hunk of irony that perhaps the other oldest living American-in-Paris (at least theatre and art wise) is the New Yorker Paris rep, Janet Flanner, who lives (no innuendos now!) in the same hotel with Marks. And two more different people you could not imagine.

As a windup to this necessarily once-over-lightly, perhaps mention should be made of the rue Blondel and rue Charbonnier joie de vivre joints, which used to get such a big play from Americans. In the interim, it seems, the French police think they've closed 'em all up. Well—remember what happened at home during Prohibition? That's right. You need new addresses now.

Future of Tollvision

Continued from page 29

to take a stand on whether or not he will cooperate with this new, and potentially very powerful, form of telecasting. It will not be an easy choice to make.

Many In Hollywood for It

There is a good deal of evidence that Hollywood is more than just intrigued with the possibilities of toll-tv. Julian Blaustein, a producer, said in N.Y. not long ago that, in his opinion, 85% of the Screen Producers Guild members favored pay-as-you-see. Samuel Goldwyn has repeatedly indicated he thinks toll-tv could do great things for Hollywood, and Walter Wanger has said that, if what he hears is true, he "would be delighted to cooperate," partly because a boxoffice in the home would provide a producer with a much faster—and potentially much greater—return of his investment.

Prior to the licensing of its Subscriber-Vision pay-as-you-see system to Matthew Fox, Skiatron's Arthur Levey was approached by Warner Bros. and one or two other producer interests with propositions that envisioned their buying an interest in the system. Paramount, of course, already is in toll-tv up to its neck via the Telemeter setup which it tested in Palm Springs, Cal., early in 1954. There may be some significance to the fact that, officially at least, that experimental run was discontinued because of the unavailability of a sufficient number of first-run features.

Exhibs Ag'in It

In contrast to the producer position, exhibition's attitude towards toll-tv is one of unrelenting opposition. Latter has resulted in an ironic situation which has seen the Joint Committee on Toll TV emerging as the champion of "free" television and vowing a "fight to the end" on subscription-tv as a "monopoly of communications."

There is no doubt that the position of the theatremen, forcefully put forward at any FCC hearing, is apt to have some weight. At the same time, a good many observers feel that the exhibitors' case is something less than airtight. A few weeks ago, the toll-tv committee made known that it had no objections to pay-as-you-see provided the service were operated along the same economic lines as theatre-tv, i.e. with each home set being wired separately.

It's questioned seriously that the FCC will go for this line of reasoning. Once it establishes the propriety and legality of partial use of hitherto "free" channels for subscription-tv, the Commission isn't likely to set standards that will make the service as expensive to operate as possible.

FCC In The Middle

The FCC, when it decides to sked hearings on toll-tv, has a real hot potato on its hands. Obviously, there will be vigorous opposition, not only from the exhibitors, but also from elements within the broadcasting industry itself, and from the agencies who stand to lose out on some cream viewing time. Apart from all that, it must take into consideration the kind of precedent it would be setting in making the switch to the new form of broadcasting which, if successful, would cue some revolutionary changes in an industry long-governed by the concept of the "free air."

On the other hand, the number of applications for subscription-tv service pending from UHF stations is indicative of the plight of these broadcasters and the urgency of the situation which demands that something be done to insure their survival. Also, there is no question that a number of programs of a costly nature are not available under the present commercial setup and may never be available until and unless tv is put on a paying basis.

Solons in the Act

The pressures on the Commission are manifold. In September, for instance, Sen. Andrew F. Schoeppel (R., Kan.), a member of the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee, stated he had become more convinced than ever that the status of toll-tv should be looked into. In view of "the economic drought that is slowing down television growth," he said, "the time is ripe to prime tv with a 'subscripter' source of revenue to broaden its economic base." Schoeppel asked the FCC what it was waiting for.

On the other hand, there still pends in the Congress the Hinshaw bill under which any subscription-tv service would be rated as a public utility, i.e. its rates could be fixed by the Interstate Commerce Commission.

The fact that the subscription-tv issue is coming to a head slowly but surely, predicated in part on conditions within the tv industry itself, became evident during 1954. There was the Telemeter test. Late in the year, Matty Fox and a group of moneyed backers took over Skiatron's Subscriber-Vision and filed an application with the FCC, urging that any authorization be limited to UHF station for a three-year period. In November, Zenith, which had submitted its first application for a commercial license to the FCC in 1952, updated its petition and asked the Commission to authorize a toll-tv service immediately and without hearings. It now appears that the FCC may get into the question by midyear at the latest.

There is a feeling that, despite exhibitor pressure to the contrary, certain of the producers — and quite a few of the independents — will lend a helping hand in launching the new medium. In a recent statement, Al Lichtman, director of sales for 20th-Fox, specifically stated his company "believed in theatre-tv," but "wouldn't cooperate with toll-tv." Significantly he qualified this by adding "unless we are forced to." After all is said and done, it may be the Justice Dept. which will give the producers the out they need vis-a-vis the exhibs to test the true measure of the living room boxoffice.

BERNARD REICH STILL PITCHING VS. HUGHES

Hollywood.

Tangled minority stockholder suit vs Howard Hughes and RKO enters another round Monday (Jan. 3) when U.S. Court of Appeals for Ninth Circuit considers motion to "re-settle" court order denying previous motion to dismiss appeal in case.

This new appeal was filed by Bernard Reich, Beverly Hills attorney, who has been fighting case for two years since originally retained as local counsel by Eli and Marion Castleman.

B'way B.O. Boffo Going Into 1955; 'Cruz,' 'Sea,' 'Chalice,' 'Circus' Smash New Pix; 'Biz,' 'Girl,' 'Heart' Hot H.O.s

Broadway first-run theatres rounded out 1954 on the crest of a great boxoffice upsurge. The 7-day period from Sunday (26) through Saturday (1) saw Broadway so jammed with prospective cinema ducat purchasers it resembled New Year's Eve. With many houses, it was just a question of how many people could be accommodated. The all-day rain Wednesday (29), which became a heavy rainfall at night, clipped after-dark trade at some spots. New Year's eve boxoffice was in the usual stride with upped scales at most houses making exhibitors happy.

Virtually every theatre with new product did well after Dec. 24, with many people going to see two different pix so attractive was the lineup of new fare. After soaring to a huge $190,000 in third session with "Deep in My Heart" and annual Xmas stageshow, the Music Hall was expecting to hold near that figure in the current (4th) round, largely because of the extra New Year's Eve show, reservations for which were sold out many weeks ago.

Biggest coin total of the newcomers was garnered by "Vera Cruz" opening week at the Capitol, with a terrific $87,000. "Silver Chalice" was right behind and just as strong with $80,000 at the Paramount.

One of the outstanding showings was made by "20,000 Leagues Under the Sea," which hit a mighty $61,000 in intial session at the Astor. Current (2d) week will be nearly as big, since taking in New Year's Eve. The house lost out on a couple of thousand dollars when the Astor management found youngsters staying over for a second show—or sometimes a third.

"Country Girl," which was giant $63,000 in second frame at the Criterion, is holding close to that level in the third. "3-Ring Circus" landed a wow $55,000 opening round at the State. "Green Fire" was rated good at $18,500 opening stanza at the Mayfair.

"No Business Like Show Business," which soared to a great $140,000 in second frame at the Roxy, is holding firmly in third week. "Gate of Hell," given a further boost by the crix' award, is running ahead of the second stanza's terrific $22,500 in the third week at the Guild.

Estimates for Last Week

Astor (City Inv.) (1,300; 75-$1.75)—"20,000 Leagues Under Sea" (BV) (2d wk). This session started Dec. 29. First week hit mighty $61,000. Turnover hurt by juveniles who stayed in theatre for more than one show. In for longrun.

Little Carnegie (L. Carnegie) (550; $1.25-$2.20)—"Aida" (IFE) (8th wk). Present stanza opened Dec. 30. The seventh week climbed to smash $11,000. Stays on.

Baronet (Reade) (430; 90-$1.55)—"Game of Love" (Indie) (4th wk). This round started Tuesday (4). The third week held close to or may top the second which was big $9,400.

Capitol (Loew's) (4,820; 85-$2.20)—"Vera Cruz" (UA) (2d wk). Current week opened Jan. 1. Initial session ended Dec. 31 was terrific $87,000, taking in New Year's Eve. Pic appears in for a smash longrun here.

Criterion (Moss) (1,700; 75-$2.20)—"Country Girl" (Par) (3d wk). This frame started Thursday (30). Second week hit wow $63,000. Continues on.

Fine Arts (Davis) (468; 90-$1.80)—"The Detective" (Col) (10th wk). The ninth round opened Monday (27). The eight week held with fancy $6,000 after $6,500 in seventh. Stays on.

Globe (Brandt) ((1,500; 70-$1.50)—"Athena" (M-G) (3d wk). Second week opened Tuesday (28) after okay $10,000 opening week.

Guild (Guild) (450; $1-$1.75)—"Gate to Heil" (Indie) (4th wk). Third frame teed off Dec. 28, and may hit a record since running ahead of second week's terrific $22,500 by a sizeable margin. N.Y. Critic Circle's award for being best foreign film naturally helped.

Mayfair (Brandt) (1,736; 79-$1.80)—"Green Fire" (M-G) (2d wk). Second session opened Friday (31). First week hit good $18,500.

Normandie (Trans-Lux) (592; 95-$1.80)—"Big Day" (Indie) (3d wk). This round started Friday (31). Second week held with nice $4,000.

Palace (RKO) (1,700; 50-$1.60)—"Black Tuesday" (UA) with vaudeville. Opened Friday (31). Ir ahead, "This Is My Love" (RKO) and vaude, giant $28,500 in week ended Dec. 30.

Paramount (ABC-Par) (3,664; 85-$1.75)—"Silver Chalice" (WB) (2d wk). This round opened Jan. 1. First week of "Chalice" soared to terrific $80,000. House used "Young at Heart" (WB) as its feature pic one day only, Friday (31), with "Chalice" resuming the following day (Sat.).

Paris (Pathe Cinema) (568; 90-$1.80)—"Animal Farm" (Indie) (2d wk). This week started today (Wed.) after nice opening round. In ahead. "Bread, Love, Dreams" (IFE) (11th wk-9 days), $7,000 after great longruns.

Radio City Music Hall (Rockefellers) (6,200; 95-$2.75)—"Deep in My Heart" (M-G) plus annual Christmas stageshow (4th wk). This session started Thursday (30). Third week soared to colossal $190,000, very close to all-time mark here for single week. Second week was $168,000. Third stanza's showing was remarkable in view of having only three five-show days. Now looks sure to at least run through Jan. 12.

Roxy (Nat'l. Th.) (5,717; 65-$2.40)—"No Business Like Show Business" (20th) (3d wk). Third round opened Friday (31). Second week soared to smash $140,000, almost double opening stanza's take.

State (Loew's) (3,450; 78-$1.75)—"3 Ring Circus" (Par) (2d wk). This week started Friday (31). Initial stanza for this second VistaVision pic to be released by Paramount hit whopping $55,000, one of biggest sessions here in a number of weeks.

Sutton (R&B) (561; $1-$1.80)—"Romeo and Juliet" (UA) (3d wk). Second week opened Dec. 29. First round hit socko $15,000. House found turnover a bit slow because of picture's length.

Trans-Lux 60th St. (T-L) (453; $1-$1.50)—"Hunters of Deep" (DCA) (3d wk). Current frame teed off Dec. 30. Second week held with good $3,200.

Trans-Lux 52nd St. (T-L) (540; $1-$1.50)—"Tonight's the Night" (AA) (2d wk). Initial holdover round started Thursday (30). First week hit smash $10,500.

Victoria (City Inv.) (1,060; 50-$1.75)—"Star Is Born" (WB) (13th wk). This session opened Monday (3). The 12th week looked like it would run $9,000 to $10,000 better than the 11th stanza, based on first five days, trade. This would make the 12th round (ended Jan. 2) a terrific $32,000 or better. The 11th week was $23,000. Stays on indef.

Warner (Cinerama Prod.) (1,600; $1.20-$3.30)—"Cinerama" (Indie) (83d wk). The 82d week which ended last Saturday (1) was running substantially ahead of the previous round, with 23 shows (seven more than usual) helping. The 81st week hit big $30,000. Second "Cinerama" pic is due in early in February.

'Cruz' Mighty Leader In Denver; 'Sea,' 'Biz' Great

Denver.

For Christmas week, business was very solid in most first-runs, with the result that six of the seven bills held over. Some of them were able to put the New Year's Eve gross on the week by starting their films Xmas day. "Vera Cruz," "Under the Sea," "Show Business" and "3-Ring Circus" shape best bets in about that order. "Cruz" is especially great.

Estimates for Last Week

Aladdin (Fox) (1,400; 50-85)—"Detective" (Col) (2d wk). Last week, big $4,000.

Centre (Fox) (1,247; 60-$1)—"Show Business" (20th) (2d wk). Last week, sock $17,000.

Denham (Cockrill) (1,750; 60-$1)—"3-Ring Circus" (Par) (2d wk). Last week, big $15,000.

Denver (Fox) (2,525; 60-$1)—"20,000 Leagues Under Sea" (BV) (2d wk). Last week, smash $26,500.

Esquire (Fox) (742; 50-85)—"Bread, Love, Dreams" (IFE) (2d wk). Last week, fine $3,500.

Orpheum (RKO) (2,600; 50-85)—"Hansel and Gretel" (RKO) and "Tohor the Great" (Rep) (2d wk). Last week, not so good $5,000.

Paramount (Wolfberg) (2,200; 60-$1)—"Vera Cruz" (UA) (2d wk). Still going great after terrific $29,000 opener.

Seattle Biz Still Sock For New Year; 'Circus,' 'Sea,' 'Pagan,' 'Biz' Tops

Seattle.

Music Hall, with "Deep in My Heart," offers the only new fare for New Year's opening week as most spots hold their Xmas week b.o. champs for another stanza. The Blue Mouse has the moveover of "Young At Heart" from the Music Hall. "20,000 Leagues Under Sea" tops the field again after a smash opening round at Paramount. Continuing sock in second sessions are "3-Ring Circus" at Coliseum, "Show Business" at Fifth Avenue, and "Sign of Pagan" at the Orpheum. "Sabrina" stays on for a ninth stanza at the Music Box.

Estimates for Last Week

Blue Mouse (Hamrick) (800; 75-$1)—"Young At Heart" (WB) and "Fast and Furious" (Indie) (m.o.). Last week, "Hansel and Gretel" (RKO) (2d wk), slow $2,100 at 90c-$1 scale.

Coliseum (Evergreen) (1,829; 75-$1) — "3-Ring Circus" (Par) and "Black Dakotas" (Col) (2d wk). Last week, smash $14,800.

Fifth Avenue (Evergreen) (2,500; $1-$1.50)—"Show Business" (20th). (2d wk). Last week, solid $14,500.

Music Box (Hamrick) (850; 90-$1.25)—"Sabrina" (Par) (9th wk). Last week, fine $3,200.

Music Hall (Hamrick) (2,300; 90-$1.25)—"Deep in My Heart" (M-G) Last week, "Young At Heart" (WB) and "Fast and Furious" (Indie), okay $6,500.

Orpheum (Hamrick) (2,700; 75-$1) — "Sign of Pagan" (U) and "Four Guns to Border" (U) (2d wk). Last week, great $13,000.

Paramount (Evergreen) (3,039; $1-$1.35) — "Leagues Under Sea" (BV) (2d wk). Last week, hit the ceiling for smash $27,000.

Chi Starts Bangup New Year; 'Sea,' 'Show Biz,' 'Chalice,' 'Hansel' Great

Chicago.

Even with 11 new pix hitting the Main Stem for holiday consumption in Christmas week, seasonal biz did not quite meet expectations. Trade was a bit lopsided, with "20,000 Leagues Under Sea" getting heaviest play for a wham $62,000 at the State-Lake. The Oriental's "No Business Like Show Business" grabbed a great $48,000.

"Silver Chalice" at United Artists did a whopping $33,000 for one of standout showings. "Deep In My Heart" took in a good $23,000 at the McVickers. "Hansel and Gretel" at the Loop landed a juicy $16,000, mostly from the juvenile trade. "Fire Over Africa" and "They Rode West" was a fair $10,000 at the Grand.

Estimates for Last Week

Chicago (B&K) (3,900; 98-$1.50)—"Young At Heart" (WB) (2d wk) with Don Cornell helming vaude bill. Topped last week's opening total with a lofty $56,000.

Grand (Nomikos) (1,200; 98-$1.25)—"Fire Over Africa" (Col) and "They Rode West" (Col). Action fare grabbed an oke $10,000.

Loop (Telem't) (606; 90-$1.25)—"Hansel and Gretel" (RKO). Garnered a nice $16,000.

McVickers (JL&S) (2,200; 65-$1.25)—"Deep In My Heart" (M-G). Showed a slightly disappointing $23,000, but still was good.

Monroe (Indie) (1,000; 65-87) — "Trouble In Glen" (Rep). Fancy $11,000.

Oriental (Indie) (3,400; 90-$1.25)—"Show Business" (20th). Boffo $48,000, for one of best showing in the Loop.

Palace (Eitel) (1,484; $1.25-$3.40) — "Cinerama" (Indie) (74th wk). Nabbed a fine $19,000.

State-Lake (B&K) (2,700; 98-$1.25) — "20,000 Leagues Under Sea" (BV). Terrific $62,000.

Surf (H&E Balaban) (685; 95) — "Detective" (Col). Unhurt by damp weather for socko $6,000.

United Artists (B&K) (1,700; (98-$1.25) — "Silver Chalice" (WB). Smash $33,000, and unusually big for house.

Woods (Essaness) (1,206; 98-$1.25) — "Last Time Saw Paris" (M-G) (5th wk). Held up well at brisk $18,000.

World (Indie) (697; 98)—"Aida" (IFE). Wow $8,000 in opening week for Italian import.

L.A. Carries Over Xmas Champs Into '55; 'Sea' Holds Record Pace, 'Girl,' 'Pagan,' 'Chalice' Standout

Los Angeles.

Local firstrun theatres start off the new year with a load of holdover bills, nearly all films having opened during Christmas week to take advantage of lush holiday trade.

Last week saw boxoffice coin zooming up to a postwar high total, meaning the year closed out about even with the previous 12 months after having slipped sharply early in the fourth quarter.

"Young at Heart," "Sign of Pagan," "Show Business," "Silver Chalice," and "Leagues Under Sea" loom as standout in second weeks. Last-named hit a record opening week.

Estimates for Last Week

Warner Beverly (SW) (1,612; 90-$1.50)—"Country Girl" (Par) (2d wk). Started second frame Dec. 29 after fine $20,000 in first week.

Orpheum, Hawaii (Metropolitan-G&S) (2,213; 1,106; 60-$1.10)—"3-Ring Circus" (Par) (2d wk). Into second week also Wednesday (29) after neat $25,000 last week.

Warner Downtown, Wiltern, Vogue (SW-FWC) (1,757; 2,344; 885; 70-$1.10)—"Young At Heart" (WB) and "Masterson of Kansas" (Col) (2d wk). Second frame started Dec. 29 after brisk $25,000 opening stanza.

Four Star (UATC) (900; 90-$1.50)—"Detective" (Col) (2d wk). Into second frame Dec. 29 after socko $11,000 in first.

New Fox (FWC) (965; 70-$1.10)—"White Christmas" (Par) (2d wk). Still big after solid $9,000 last week.

Hollywood Paramount (F&M) (1,430; $1-$1.50)—"Sign of Pagan" (U) (2d wk). Started second session Thursday (30) after nice $19,000 last week.

Chinese (FWC) (1,905; $1-$1.75)—"Show Business" (20th) (2nd wk). Took off on second round Dec. 31 after great $45,000 last week.

State, Egyptian (UATC) (2,404; 1,536; 90-$1.50)—"Deep In Heart" (M-G) (2d wk). Started second week Friday (31) after fairly okay $26,000 last week.

Los Angeles, Ritz, Loyola, Hollywood (FWC) (2,097; 1,363; 1,248; 756; $1-$1.50) — "Desiree" (20th) and "Steel Cage" (UA) (2d wk). Into current frame Dec. 31 after smart $38,000 last week.

Wilshire (FWC) (2,296; $1-$1.50)—"20,000 Leagues Under Sea" (BV) (2d wk). Continuing record pace in second week, started Jan. 1, after new high of $50,000 opening round.

Hillstreet, Pantages (RKO) (2,752; 2,812; $1-$1.80)—"Silver Chalice" (WB) (2d wk). Into current session Jan. 1 after robust $45,000 last week.

Downtown Paramount (ABPT) (3,200; 90-$1.50)—"Star Is Born" (WB) (2d wk). Launched second week Jan. 1 after good $18,000 last week.

Fine Arts (FWC) (631; $1-$1.75)—"Barefoot Contessa" (UA) (9th wk). Started this round of strong run on Dec. 31 after neat $5,000 last week.

Warner Hollywood (SW) (1,364; $1.20-$2.65)—"Cinerama" (Indie) (88th wk). Into current frame Jan. 2 after soaring to near wow $30,000 last week.

'Sea' Wham, 'Biz' Tall, St. Loo Aces

St. Louis.

Two days of rain slowed down turnstile activity at the big cinemas but this was offset by week vacation for kiddies plus heavy New Year's Eve biz. "20,000 Leagues Under Sea" and "Show Business" are outstanding, former being especially great. "Hansel and Gretel" looks solid in two arty spots.

Estimates for Last Week

Ambassador (Indie) (1,400; $1.20-$2.40)—"Cinerama" (Indie) (49th wk). Last week, okay $10,000.

Fox (F&M) (5,000; 75)—"Young At Heart" (WB) and "Bob Mathias Story" (AA). Opened Tuesday (28). Last week, "Saratoga Trunk" (WB) and "Big Sleep" (WB) (reissues), fair $9,500.

Loew's (Loew's) (3,172; 50-75)—"Sitting Bull" (UA) and "Gog" (UA). Okay $15,000. Previous week "Suddenly" (UA) and "Khyber Patrol" (UA), $10,500.

Orpheum (Loew's) (1,400; 50-75) — "20,000 Leagues Under Sea" (BV) (2d wk). Last week, terrific $21,000.

Pageant (St. L. Amus.) (1,000-82) "Hansel and Gretel" (RKO) (2d wk. Last week, this pic hit a big $4,200.

Richmond (St. L. Amus.) (400; 82)—"Hansel and Gretel" (RKO) (2d wk). Last week, garnered a solid $3,000.

St. Louis (St. L. Amus.) (4,000; 65-90) — "Show Business" (20th) (2d wk). Last week, great $27,000.

Stout Fare Makes Buff. New Year Happy; 'Sea,' 'Show Biz,' 'Chalice' Lead

Buffalo.

Many of pix which opened so big Xmas week are holding over to give the initial session of the new year a bright tinge. "Show Business" at the Buffalo, "3-Ring Circus" at Paramount, "Leagues Under Sea" at Century and "Silver Chalice" all are sturdy in their holdover rounds. "Sign of Pagan" started out big at Lafayette.

Estimates for This Week

Buffalo (Loew's) (3,000; 70-$1)—"Show Business" (20th) (2d wk). First week hit big $21,000.

Paramount (Par) (3,000; 50-80)—"3-Ring Circus" (Par) (2d wk). Last week, lively $18,000.

Center (Par) (2,000; 50-80)—"Silver Chalice" (WB) (2d wk). Opening session landed wow $16,500.

Lafayette (Basil) (3,000; 50-80)—"Sign of Pagan" (U) and "Race for Life" (U). Opened big with year-end holidays helping. Last week, "Hansel and Gretel" (RKO) and "Yellow Mountain" (Indie), oke $10,000.

Century (Buhawk) (3,000! 80-$1.00)—"20,000 Leagues Under Sea" (BV) (2d wk). First session hit giant $27,000.

UFA Bavarian Studios For Sale at $4,500,000

Frankfurt.

Under the terms of liquidation for the pre-war UFA theatre and production monopoly in Germany, the former UFA studios in Bavaria are being offered for sale through the Sueddeutsche Bank of Germany. About 1,000 prospectuses were printed, but this property holds such great interest to the local theatre industry that within two days all were given out.

These large studios are in exceient condition, having been renovated and rented to independent producers since the war. Asking price for the property is about $4,500,000.

Charles Schlaifer of ad agency of the same title currently on the Coast.

Port. Perking; 'Circus,' 'Sea,' 'Show Biz' Leaders

Portland, Ore.

Biz started to perk here last week after a long slump. All first-runs opened with strong product but not all of it clicked. "20,000 Leagues," "Show Business" and "3-Ring Circus" are standout, the three being big to smash.

Estimates for Last Week

Broadway (Parker) (1,890; 65-90)—"So This Is Paris" (U) (2d wk). First week, fine $7,000.

Fox (Evergreen) (1,536; $1-$1.25)—"Show Business" (20th) (2d wk). First week was socko $13,200.

Guild (Indie) (400; $1)—"Little Kidnappers" (Indie) (2d wk). First week, good $3,200.

Liberty (Hamrick) (1,875; $1-$1.25)—"Deep In Heart" (M-G) (2d wk). Last week, nice $7,000.

Orpheum (Evergreen) (1,600; $1-$1.25)—"20,000 Leagues Under Sea" (BV) (2d wk). Opening week was wow $17,500.

Paramount (Port-Par) (3,400; 75-$1)—"3 Ring Circus" (Par) and "Operation Manhunt" (UA) (2d wk). Last week, big $11,500.

FILMS RADIO VIDEO MUSIC STAGE

VARIETY

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CONGRATS ON BOFF 49 YRS.

Agencies Mull New Show Formats For Vegas Spectacular Hotel Boom

Las Vegas, Nov. 30.

The talent agencies are again scouting for ideas for Las Vegas hotels. Agencies are mulling girl shows, big production ideas and even the possibility of intimate shows in order to make the lounges of the various Nevada inns attractive to the gambling gentry.

Revival of thinking along lines of new formats is sparked by the fact that they must keep on good terms with all the hotels in that area. With more hostels going up, they know that there won't be enough names to go around for all. Many of the top acts who are accustomed to playing at one spot will not move to rival hotels, and there aren't enough newcomers in the super-salaried brackets to get them to play the newer and spots still to be established.

Fact that the LV inns won't be easy marks much longer is indicated by the fact that the Dunes Hotel will specialize in production. The inn originally wanted Billy Rose to be in charge of floorshows, but he declined and recommended the producer they did hire, Robert Nesbitt, a Briton. The Riviera has been angling for a N. Y. cafeman.

(Continued on page 66)

'Pillime'

Jolson and Cantor find themselves billed vicariously at a Long Island and a Yonkers, N. Y., nitery, both spots playing only weekend dates.

"The new Al Jolson" is super-billed over Norman Brooks at the Casa Seville, Franklin Square, L. I., and Bobby ...'s booking at the Capital ..., in Yonkers, is heralded as "Eddie Cantor's great discovery."

Cn Fav ($8,200), Buogci (500) OOS Foocic Soinyou

One way to put more money ... the back and ... equity ... hot ... have ...

'CLASS' BALL TO SWELL MNS B.O.

By FRED HIFT

Does "Culture"—with a capital "C"—have a draw at the film boxoffice?

New York showmen, with an eye (1) towards the (to many) surprising success of the Italian opera film, "Aida," in N.Y. and (2) towards theatre-tv's apparent yen for highbrow events such as the Metropolitan Opera premiere performance, are beginning to wonder. Specifically, they think the "culture" pitch could be shaped into a valuable addendum to the current drive to broaden film theatre attendance.

Suspicion has lingered for a long time among the companies that "culture," if properly handled, can pay off. "Hamlet" and "Henry V" were examples of that. Just how large is that intellectually-inclined sector of the film audience? No one really knows, but it's suspected that, counting more than just the ...

Disney's Reaffirmation of TV; Tells Exhibs To Stop Squawking

By POP CHARLOLP

Motion picture industry "should have been in television long ago" instead of fighting it, says Walt Disney. Now heavily engaged in television production via his ABC "Disneyland" series, Disney views the medium as a means of "creating excitement" about good motion pictures and as an excellent means of getting people to go to the theatres. People will go to the movies if there's a good show, but "we've got to let them know about the show and create excitement about it." His television series, he feels, is just the means to do it.

Disney feels that exhibitors who squawk about his tv show aren't justified, from a number of angles. For one thing, he's certain that tv will help boost the b.o. on his pictures—the day after the tv show featured films showing how "The Vanishing Prairie" was shot, ... where the film was ...

Han. cn Pvc

Day after Milton Berle collapsed at Lindy's from overwork, an unemployed comic cracked:

"I fainted last week at the Stage Delicatessen. Underwork."

Riac Wesi's $92,009 Wl lv oi N.Y.'s 10 All-Time Coic B.O.

... west has frequently bragged that she was instrumental in Paramount's paying off the mortgage two ... ago, when ...

What Price Censorship; Actor 'Reads' ..., As Poli ...

Vincent Price ... ton censor ... last week... As ... Susan," playing ... ment at the ... took advantage ... line to get a ... ence.

"Censor ... line ... night's ... the dialog ... he was ... paused ... bowdler ... a line ... won't ... the ... It was ... the rao ...

Whatever ... thought ... attempt ... offer punis...

BIPOWFI ... TO

In plain English we really mean:

"Best Wishes to a great Reporter of Show Business on your 49th Anniversary!"

FROM THE NSS

Prize Baby!

A Handy Hollywood Baedeker

Continued from page 35

course, conceived and paid for by top playwright, screenplaywright, W. P. Lipscomb. Such an ardent nature boy was Bill, that both his thumbs were green, and he blew almost his entire $2,500 a week Paramount paycheck on a several-acre estate that soon looked like a cross between a Watteau painting and the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. One fine payday, he was astonished to find that he had on his payroll a gardening staff of nine!

Mrs. Lipscomb was beginning to pale perceptibly at the state of their exchequer, but Bill was too softhearted to prune his staff because the gardeners were old Scotchmen, Welshmen and henchmen of his, so he looked for new ways to keep them busy. He also pointed out to Mrs. L. that, in a way, they were "saving money in the long run" by making their place so beautiful that they wouldn't want to leave it for expensive recreation elsewhere. To this end, and to further prove his point, he brought in a landscape architect as a "fresh mind." The upshot — the next morning the green hills of Lipscomb Manor were alive with busy workmen assisting the staff in laying out a 9-hole golf course!

Came the big day when it was finished — a Saturday night to be exact. Sunday dawned bright and clear. Over the orange pekoe and breakfast muffins, Bill casually suggested to his spouse that they inspect their virgin links.

Slinging clubs over their shoulders, they strolled proudly to the first tee of their "very own" private 9-hole golf course.

As Bill prepared to address the ball, about to christen the course, he looked up with a strange quizzical look at his wife and queried: "By the way, my dear, do you like golf?"

She thought for only a second and then, in a matter-of-fact voice, replied: "No."

"Neither do I," said Bill. He never finished his swing, sold the place the next week and went home to England, where he now lives on the Cornish coast—and happily—in an old abandoned streetcar he has successfully converted into a home. (This is no kidding either.) Whether it is called "Desire" I don't know. You'll just have to write and ask him.

CHAPTER VIII
Fish Stories

Was it Isaac Walton who said: "There's no thrill like getting up in the morning, dropping a line in a running brook, practically under your bedroom window and catching your own trout for breakfast?"

I don't know. Isaac may have said it first, but it was Tay Garnett who said it a dozen years ago when he was the Laird of a Stone Canyon manse that boasted, among other things, a running stream.

To get right to the heart of the artichoke and give it to you in a nutshell, Tay's best friend recommended a landscape architect — his brother — who could construct in a jiffy, a series of waterfalls and stock the tiny ponds with enough fish for a year of breakfasts.

Like Shelley's heart at the sight of skylarks, Tay's ticker leaped up at the vision of Rainbow trout—his "very own" dancing in the sunlight, tobogganing from one rock and rill to the other. Tay confided to me between script conferences that soon he would not only be able to supply his table, but mine as well. No longer would he have to "play the sucker" and pay the Sportsman's Tavern for our Trout Amandine—we'd be "independent"—eliminating that "costly middleman!"

The landscape architect, built along the genial lines of Uriah Heap, began operations. As I arrived each morning to work with Tay, I was amazed to see the ever-increasing hordes of masons, gardeners and waterfall installers going about their business like a well-oiled organization. But Tay soon put a stop to that by locking the liquor closet.

One morning I commented, "Tay, how can this guy do all this work—with this big a crew—for only $1,500? It's amazing!"

"Not when you stop to realize," said Tay, "that it's actually going to cost $4,000. Jack went a little over his estimate. But it's worth it. Tomorrow morning it'll be finished. Be here early when we put the fish in."

I was there—and a more beautiful sight I never did see. Shelley can keep his skylarks—Tay's face, beaming proudly as he watched his fish leaping from waterfall to waterfall, wore a look that in itself was sheer poetry. The next morning his face didn't look so hot. The landscape expert had failed to check with the Bel Air authorities—if he had, he'd have learned that the stream only ran part of the year, drying up as spring became summer. So when I found Tay, it was at the side of his now bone-dry stream, staring like an undertaker at the funeral of 500 Rainbow trout!

Never underestimate the Irish. Tay was not to be thwarted—his dream so close to consummation. So—enter once more Uriah Heap and the hordes of workmen, now including waterpump experts who, in no time at all—four weeks to be exact—set up a Rube Goldberg kind of system where Tay's water would be pumped over the waterfalls, and back to the starting point, creating an artificial stream.

Enter the Trout Expert with another 500 beauties. The roses came back into Tay's cheeks as he filled the dry stream bed with gushing garden hoses and gave the order to "Man the pump, lads!" And later to "Splice the Mainbrace for all hands!"

The next morning, the roses were gone from his cheeks —and the water from the stream. The landscape expert" hadn't reckoned with the now obvious fact that, pumps notwithstanding, the water would seep into the ground —unless the stream bed was made watertight. Tightlipped, Tay gave the order to do just that. It was Captain Ahab and the White Whale all over again.

Score so far—1,000 trout—0 for breakfast.

The workmen returned, speaking in hushed tones as they paved the stream bed. Again—enter the fish expert —this time with 200 fish. The hoses gushed forth another $17 worth of city water.

Like General Goethals at the opening of the Panama Canal, Tay watched the pumps begin, the water beat at the walls—then a cheer rose up from the hordes of workmen that lined the banks—and cries of "It's holding! It's holding! It's leakproof!"

I suddenly discovered that hot tears were coursing down my own cheeks. "Release the Rainbows!" ordered Tay in even tones, the fishman dumping his trout into the turbulent waters. Then turning to me, Tay murmured magnificently, "Drop in for breakfast—I think we'll have trout for a change." We exchanged a look that said everything.

At the moment we had no way to knowing that during the night we were to have one of those tropical floods from the skies. Down it poured, and the next day I could barely navigate Stone Canyon, now a swelling river. When I reached Casa Garnett, I found that his stream had become a lake—a lake flowing into his swimming pool—the overflow filling his living room! For the dry bed was now a torrent, as flood waters rushed down from the Santa Monica Mountains—and Tay's $6,000 worth of waterfalls were acting as a dam—creating a body of water on the lower floor of his house, roughly comparable to Lake Mead!

And there stood Tay in So'wester and hipboots—fierce and defiant as Captain Ahab—smashing the waterfalls with a sledgehammer to open sluice ways in the dam!

* * *

I'm almost as sensitive as Tennessee Williams—whenever he sees little glass animals in a window anywhere, he gets a lump in his throat; I get one now whenever I see a passing trout in the crowd.

At Chasen's they were cruel. They used to catcall to Tay, bent over his steak—"Hey—tell us about the fish that got away! Ha! Ha! Or was it a whole hatchery?" I always thought such remarks were in bad taste.

And so as Tay Garnett's hopes and dreams of an Anglers' Paradise in-his-own-backyard sink slowly into the shale of Stone Canyon, we say "Aloha Noah Noah." Which means: "From now on, Wiseguy, get smart and buy your fish at the Farmer's Market!"

* * *

CHAPTER IX
Trout Tales Continued

Phil Rapp had a similar experience on his Valley rancho. Built an artificial stream and ordered $800 worth of speckled trout from another Fish Expert who looked suspiciously like Percy Kilbride. Phil was going to go Tay one better—he was going into the trout raising business. Things, however, didn't turn out exactly according to plan. A minute after the Expert dumped the fish into the stream —to a trout they all floated to the surface, gills still as death. While Phil watched horrorstricken, wallet and mouth open, frozen in the midst of paying the Expert, the latter cooly, unperturbedly took the money from Phil's palsied fingers. "But—but they're dying—do something—they're dead—all dead!" screamed Phil.

"Wrong kind of water—not enough oxygen for this type of mountain trout," replied the Expert, as he swung a leg into his Pierce-Arrow stationwagon.

"Then why—why didn't you tell me?" called Phil.

"You didn't ask me," was the Expert's reply.

CHAPTER X
Greenhorns to California Should Also Stay Away from Dry Lakes

Till you get the lay of the land, don't sink your dough into lake property. You might wake up one morning to find yours as dry as Tay Garnett's stream. Take the tragic case of one Norman McLeod, a longtime dweller on the shores of Lake Toluca—and, incidentally, he lives right next door to Gladys Lehman's former $1,800 sycamore. He swears there's a tree surgeon or two still working away inside. On certain nights, when the moon is full, he hears strange chiseling noises.

But I digress—about Norman's lake, he recently found to his chagrin that it had disappeared. It seems that the spring-fed body of water was kaput because the springs had run dry.

This was a body blow to Norman, who had loved Toluca since the early days when he and other Mack Sennett and Al Christie directors used to shoot comedies on the lake. One of Norman's most vivid memories was W. C. Fields in a canoe, during a scene, being attacked by a pugnacious swan—not in the script. And Bill cursing and doing battle with an oar, flailing like Don Quixote at the Windmills.

But gone were those days—and now gone was the lake itself! A neighbor of Norman's, however, still kept his yacht club flags flying bravely over his boathouse—as a gallant, defiant gesture, in the spirit of the Tricolor flying over the fort of the dead in Beau Geste.

Norman, however, was in an even more embarrassing and acute situation. He had harbored a longtime, secret dream of an indulgence in the tradition of the ancient Clan McLeod of which he is a direct and worthy descendant. It seems the Castle McLeod stands on a lake on which for years black swans sailed in Scotch majesty.

After 20 years, Norman had decided to indulge himself and buy a black swan for his watery frontyard. He called up his local swan seller, ordered a black beauty, and was a proud man when it was delivered.

The swan was proud, too, and put up quite a nasty struggle, but Norman, with nipped and agile fingers, finally managed to get the savage creature to the water's edge—only to find—you guessed it! *No Water!!!*

The swan must still be in Norman's bathtub—else why does he always take his baths nowadays in the studio gym?

There is a happy ending—Toluca Lake is now being paved—with equal parts of cement and money.

However, if you're in no financial position to afford an occasional $5,000 assessment from time to time—don't go near the water.

* * *

Before we end our section on the great and costly California Outdoors, I want to leave you with two words—Lou Levy.

The demon music publisher, in a former Hollywood life, had purchased the eyrie of Jimmy Van Heusen, high above the Sunset Strip. Before anyone could say "Save your money!" he had bought the lot next door for a swimming pool site, built a retaining wall to retain the old wall that was too weak to retain the pool, and sent out invitations for a Grand Pool Opening.

Now before I get to the blackout—I have to introduce some other characters—and what characters!—the kids next door.

Lou, a sucker for children, gave them the run of the place—he let them chop up the new lawn with his new croquet mallets, and generally played the good new neighbor.

Came the proud day when his pool was to be finished. His entire staff of songpluggers was given the afternoon off to initiate the pool. It was a gala group, led by Goldie Goldmark in blue suede shoes and an orange Bikini.

But when Lou & Co. got there, it had already been initiated. Unfortunately, the contractor who built the pool still hadn't picked up his tractor. The neighbor kids had, in a burst of innocent childish gaiety, driven the tractor into the pool!

Result: The water overflowed onto the people below, the contractor wanted to sue for damages to his waterlogged tractor, as did the kids' parents—accusing Lou of creating—what is known in California legal parlance as—"an attractive hazard, endangering the lives of children."

Lou pleaded insanity and fled to New York.

* * *

Could all this heartbreak have been avoided? Don't ask me. Ask Johnny Green. He has pursued a safe and sane course where Mother Nature is concerned, concentrating his love for growing things into one single carnation, which he wears daily in his buttonhole—kept in fresh supply by the Carnation King of the Picture Industry, H. N. Swanson, whose sideline is handling authors, and who spends his entire time in his vast commercial gardens growing choice blooms named in honor of leading figures in the industry. His "Ava Gardner American Beauty," his "Columnist Carnation," an "Early Social Climber," and his "Shrinking Violet"—in honor of Jerry Lewis—winning third, fourth and fifth prizes respectively last year at the Pomona State Fair.

The secret isn't in his soil—it's in his mulch—a secret blend of all the chopped-up original stories of mine he's been unable to sell. Beats the synthetic fertilizers all hollow.

And so—in closing—I want to say that if this little guidebook has been helpful and inspirational, do write and tell me—won't you?

Only don't expect me to answer right away because I'm building a hillside home in Coldwater Canyon. Boy, what a view! And wait'll you see the layout for the citrus grove—after awhile we won't have to buy a single, solitary piece of fruit! And I'll have a few chickens and ducks, and I'm trying a couple of turkeys—of course, they're hard to raise—but the way I figure it—there are ways of cutting a buck—and after all, I don't throw it away at The Track. And then later I'll add a few baby macaws and mynah birds—gives a fellow, well, a feeling of "independence"—not to be at the mercy of those "mynah bird middlemen"—if you know what I mean?

* * *

WATCH FOR MY NEXT TWO PUBLICATIONS:
"A HANDY, HOLLYWOOD EATING GUIDE"
and
"TIPS ON TIPS"

A couple of quotes to whet your interest:

WHERE TO DINE?

Eat home. That is, when you're working at a studio, then you can afford to. Eat out only when you're not working so you can be seen. As for tips—the biggest ones are to be found on the tables of the better restaurants on Friday and Saturday nights. But make sure the waitress doesn't catch you.

and

A HANDY HOLLWOOD GUIDE TO DEVILS, DRUGS, DOCTORS, DENTISTS & DECORATORS, INCLUDING HINTS ON MAKING YOUR OWN ANTIQUES WITH COMPLETE BLUEPRINTS OF THE MORE POPULAR STUDENT LAMPS AND COBBLER'S BENCHES.

Read what A. K. of Bel Air said, and he hasn't even read the book: "As longtime prominent members of the picture industry, my wife and I naturally have had many decorators, and found that we also had many sugar and tea cannisters made into lamps, and coffee mills made into radios and tv sets. After taking your advice, I stripped the cannisters down and now find them useful in the kitchen. And the 300-year-old apothecary jars, bearing colorful Latin inscriptions, which had formerly served as ashtrays in our rumpus room, have been converted back into usable jars and sold to Schwab's—and duly credited to our delinquent account. Thank Heavens for someone who dared to take the guesswork out of liquidating our living room."

Then read what the American Medical Association says on the Chapter entitled: "Beverly Hills Medics," quote: "We'll sue!" For it dares to unmask those men of medicine who charge according to your "capacity to pay," promising in return to spend at least one day a week at the Clinic healing the poor. But, instead, are frequently to be found in Hutton & Co., bending over a ticker tape and examining a sick stock while their wives run to Don Loper's. This, alas, is also true of some of their dental colleagues. Every time Saks or Magnin's raise their prices, the inlays go up.

That's all.
The End

Thanks for letting me come into your livingroom and spoil your evening.

A Memory of Walter Hampden

It's told about Walter Hampden. He was touring in repertory and in one small town an important member of the company took ill. Hampden sent out a call for experienced actors, if any, in the burg. One old man seemed likely and Hampden asked him if he'd ever played the Ghost in Hamlet. "Oh, yes," the veteran replied, "Many times. With Booth, Jefferson and Irving." "Good," said Hampden, "Then we won't have to rehearse. You know your lines?" "Letter perfect," the old boy answered.

Came show time. The play was on and it came to Act I, Scene V. Hampden, as Hamlet, strode on and spoke: "Where wilt thou lead me? Speak, I'll go no further." He looked around? "Where wilt thou lead me? Speak, I'll go no further." Nothing; the old guy wouldn't budge. This time Hampden screamed "Speak, I'll go no further." Nothing. He ad libbed his way through the scene and when he got off he collared the old fellow and hissed, "Where were you?" "Ah," the Ghost ah'ed, "You did not give me the cue, Mr. Hampden." "Oh, no?" Hampden raved, "I'll say it again:" 'Speak I'll go no further!'" "Ah, no," the Ghost ah-no'ed "That's not what Booth, Jefferson and Irving gave me." "What did they say?" "Why they always said, "Speak, I'll go no further, That's it! You blankety-blank so-and-so!"

Bob Russell

Drawing the teeth of the tiger

The searing heat of the high-powered, long-throw, wide-screen projector is a tiger that could quickly ruin film.

It *could*—but it doesn't.

Because—today this tiger's teeth have been drawn. Reflection devices let light rays through, hold heat rays back; water-cooled gates and air jets give added protection.

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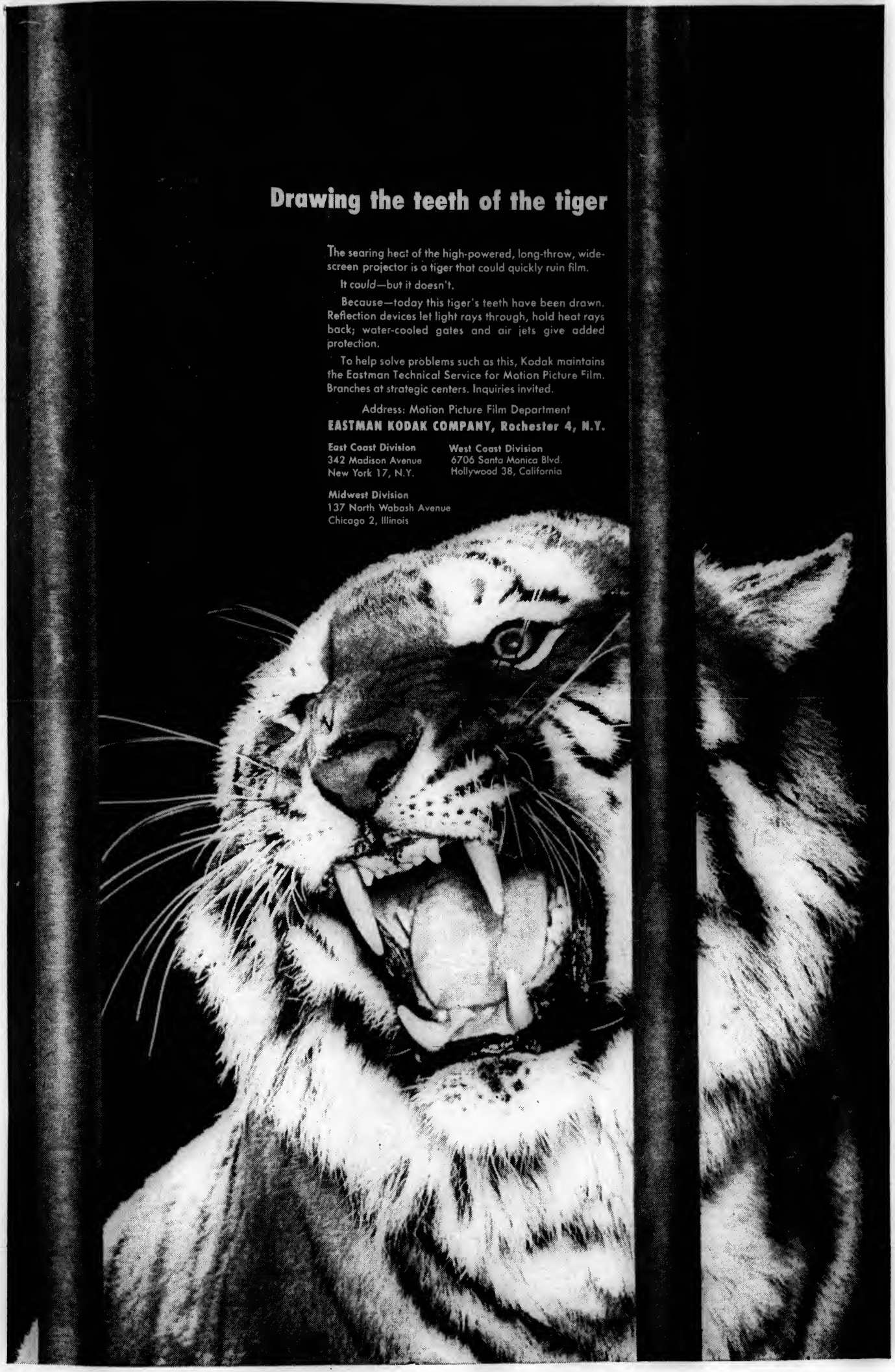

1954 In Biz There Is None Like

Continued from page 3

spectaculars ("one more bad tv show and it'll drive 'em right back into the drive-ins"); by the Hollywood studios' comeback; by a strong legit season.

Also, it was the year of the mambo, "Sh-Boom," "Ba-Zoom," "Oop-Shoop" and "Skokiaan". And of Liberace and Joe McCarthy gags, seldom very funny. Liberace was unquestionably the hottest show biz item of 1954 and is selling his pearly smile and dimples to the new Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas, for an April '55 opening at $50,000 a week, topping even the open bid for Noel Coward at $35,000 from The Sands. The Riviera is also payrolling Joan Crawford at $10,000 just to officiate as hostess at the premiere cocktail party.

Vidpix Stumping

The 1954 political race incepted a new pattern of vote-stumping—via telefilms. The vidpix pitch gave the edge to W. Averell Harriman in New York.

(Parenthetically, 1954 saw cowboy actor Rex Bell, longtime spouse of former Paramount "it" star Clara Bow, elected Lieut. Governor of Nevada—Bell operates a ranch and fancy western sporting goods emporium in Las Vegas. He follows in the tradition of bandleader Vic Meyers, perennial Lieut. Governor of Oregon, and hillbilly crooner-composer Jimmie ("You Are My Sunshine") Davis who was elected Governor of Louisiana. Stuart Hamblen, itinerant preacher and author of "This Ole House," one of the year's pop song outstanders, also has a political background—he ran for President on the Prohibition Party's ticket in 1952, and just to wrap up politics, Texas' Gov. Allan Shivers was pacted in 1954 to play the role of a Texas governor in a Paramount picture, "Lucy Gallant.")

4 Never 'Away' In Great Comebacks

Judy Garland, Frank Sinatra, Lillian Roth and Mae West were the "comebacks" of the year. Not that any of them had ever been "away," but in the ephemeral frame of fame it took "A Star Is Born" to reaffirm Miss Garland's status, just as a non-singing dramatic bit in "From Here to Eternity" dittoed for Sinatra whose personal jackpot thereafter continued apace, including such Capitol disk bestsellers as "Young At Heart" and the above film's title song.

Another manifestation of the mores of the times are deb parties being commercially "sponsored," like radio-tv nostrums, by perfume houses, jewelry manufacturers, lingerie and even liquor concerns underwriting coming-out soirees. Evyan Perfumes, for example, sponsored the International Debutante Ball. A London publicity couple has a $6,000 package deal whereunder a deb may be presented at Buckingham Palace, attend some other coming-out parties, attend Epsom, Ascot and Lord's derbies in season, and the like. Evyan also "sponsored" the Knickerbocker ball, a swank $75-a-head fancy dress brawl in the 5th avenue mansion of Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt Sr., with proceeds to sundry charities.

Gloria Vanderbilt (Mrs. Leopold) Stokowski's strawhat bit got her Broadway bids, and Betty Hutton's heartbreak retirement, at her peak, likewise made the headlines. Mrs. Alfred Gwynne (Jean) Vanderbilt was another socialite who went legit, and Mrs. John Barry Ryan 3d is a production aide to director Peter Brook of "House of Flowers," the new Harold Arlen-Truman Capote musical.

One of the Mrs. Tommy Manvilles essayed show biz of another sort, with a burlesque stint at Minsky's Adams, Newark, while British "starlet" Simone Silva, who got the bikini-and-less spotlight in a "candid" shot with Robert Mitchum, during the Cannes Film Festival, got her Hollywood opportunity in a minor film but now faces cancellation of her six-month work permit.

Eddie Fisher—and Others

Eddie Fisher was another success story of the year, with an estimated $700,000 gross and including a succession of smash Victor bestsellers, among them two more "gold records" to denote 1,000,000-copy clicks with "I'm Walking Behind You" and "Oh, My Papa."

"I Need You Now," his current platter, is heading for it.

A new generation of legit and film stars suddenly came into focus on both coasts. In addition to the aforementioned Grace Kelly there was Audrey Hepburn plus Carol Haney ("Pajama Game"), Florence Henderson ("Fanny"), Jeanmaire, Julie Andrews, Barbara Bel Geddes, Lee Grant, Kim Stanley, Kim Hunter, Kim Novak, Julie Harris and Geraldine Page.

The year saw a lot of Broadway repatriation of names from Hollywood. Instance Henry Fonda, John Hodiak, Louis Jourdan, Mel Ferrer, Ina Claire, Janis Paige, Tallulah Bankhead, Martha Scott, Deborah Kerr, David Wayne, Burgess Meredith, Franchot Tone, Lloyd Nolan, Jackie Cooper, Billy deWolfe, Donald Cook, Kitty Carlisle, Hume Cronyn, Vicki Cummings, Macdonald Carey, Vincent Price, Barry Sullivan, Brian Aherne, Edna Best, Joan Fontaine, Nancy Kelly, John Forsythe, Robert Preston, Jennifer Jones.

Soft divan seats (first seven or eight rows) became a premium location in several City Investment Co. (Robert W. Dowling-Louis A. Lotito operation) theatres. Theory was that a surcharge for these Folies Bergere (Paris)-style loveseats, instead of the specs getting it, would meet with no public objection.

Legit top for musicals upped to $7.50 ("Fanny," "Pajama Game," "Peter Pan," etc.) and there is talk of a $10 top if production costs continue upping.

Spyros Skouras Easily The Showman of the Year

Spyros Skouras, the CinemaScope man of the year, gambled his all, on behalf of 20th-Fox, and hit the jackpot. Even the skeptics concede the impact of C'Scope; concede the demise of 3-D. Upcoming X's include Todd-AO's $6,000,000 "Oklahoma." Cinerama, in its third year on Broadway, is, of course, the standout attraction of midcentury "new" film techniques—a show biz miracle all by itself.

In the telectronics field, CBS and RCA locked horns again as the former unveiled a 19-inch colorset, whereupon RCA topped it with a 21-inch job which, as the year ended, has gone on the production line at $895. RCA prexy Frank M. Folson told the N.Y. Board of Trade that the industry would hit $2,000,000,000 tint tv sales by the end of 1957, and that there would be produced 10,000,000 color set sales by '59. Right now there are 32,000,000 tv sets in American homes, of which 3% are now two-set home families.

Frank Stanton, CBS prexy, forecast 30,000,000 color tv sets by '61; an annual $1,000,000,000 gross by the four networks; and a $60,000 half-hour time cost by '57 (against the present 30G average rate).

George Gobel and Victor Borge

The outstanding "new face" of the video medium is George Gobel who had made a good impression before, but somehow stood out even more amid the lavishness on the all-network David O. Selznick two-hour spectacular saluting the Diamond Jubilee of Thomas Alva Edison's "Light" (the electric bulb).

On Broadway, another one-man comedian, Victor Borge, with his Danish musical smorgasbord of music and humor, has set an all-time mark as a one-man entertainer, playing to over 250,000 people and over $1,000,000 gross with his "Comedy In Music".

(Curiosa: Dr. Norman Vincent Peale's book, "The Power of Positive Thinking," still remains an endurance champ, but RCA Victor was doomed to disappointment in thinking it had a hot diskseller in a platter of the lower 5th Ave. clergyman's sermons, but found that while the reading public will pay $5 for his book it didn't want the pastoral philosophy on wax. It was a dud.)

As the Liberace and McCarthy gags displaced the Jorgensen jokes, another GI-gone-IRL, Tamara (nee Robert Egan) Rees became another Yates agency show biz potential. That 10%ery also handles Christine Jorgensen.

Liberace and "point of order" tidbits made for nitery and columnar cracks about Roy Cohn and G. David Schine reviving "Cohn On The Telephone," "Schine On Harvest Moon", "Schine On My Hands", "Rise and Schine" and kindred "theme" songs. In the same idiom, starting with Julius LaRosa's humility of last year, the McGuire Sisters' matrimonial plans cued into "Wedding Bells Are Breaking Up That Arthur Godfrey Gang".

The DiMaggio and Marilyn romance—and subsequent split a few months later—keyed some topical wheezes in that direction. Also a "Marilyn Monroe Mambo". That was inevitable — the tunesmiths were mamboing everything with the same abandon they used to whip up polkas and rhumbas named after personalities.

FHA "windfall" gags and the Carol and Edna hurricanes made for "big blow" and "big wind" wheezes of another calibre.

Liberace—That's All!

Liberace's "biddies to bobby-soxers" appeal materialized in a turnaway $60,000 Madison Square Garden gross, a capacity draw not equalled since Paderewski. Despite the "wiseguy" spoofing of Liberace and his brother George, the candelabras, and the rest of it, it was a case of "nobody likes me but the public." The canny showman, from Milwaukee, now ensconsed in plus environs in Beverly Hills, piano-shaped swimming pool and all, was a mopup on radio and tv. His pre-recorded and pre-filmed series of recitals, prompted his Guild Films (Reub Kaufman) distributor to attempt a violining road company with Florian Za-Bach, essaying similar musical vignettes.

Vaughn Monroe's "comeback" with "They Were Doing The Mambo", which incidentally helped spark the year's mambo vogue, revived him as a takeoff personality ("baritone with muscles"), but the comics were hungry for some new subjects.

"Hey Liberace", "When Liberace Winks At Me", "I Want Eddie Fisher for Christmas", "Point of Order Baby, I Love You", "Say Hey!" were other manifestations in pop song of topics of the year's events.

Deals & Diversification

Bill Zeckendorf bought the "sky rights" to superstructure office buildings atop Grand Central and Pennsylvania stations, after his Webb & Knapp outfit made a quick turnover on the Hotel Astor purchase to the Sheraton chain. Zeckendorf, however, lost out to Conrad N. Hilton for the Statler Hotels' takeover.

Incidentally, that new Sheraton-Astor is awkward billing. It'll always be the Astor to the Broadwayfarers.

This has been a year of mergers and diversifications. After Hilton took over the Statler chain in a $50,000,000 buy, Conrad Hilton also added the Shamrock Hotel, Houston, to his string, besides setting deals for new hotels in London, Cairo, Havana, Mexico City and Rome, on top of his Castellana Hilton, Madrid, and the soon-due Hilton hostelry in Istanbul. The Sheraton chain likewise has been adding landmarks to its string, including the Palace Hotel, San Francisco.

Diversification became a new show biz term. After S.H. (Si) Fabian took over the Warner Bros. theatre chain, in the WB divorcement, his Stanley Warner, which already included the Fabian chain, added the Cinerama franchise and absorbed Latex, giving the theatre tycoon a new kind of "three-way stretch" in show biz.

Diversification will see the new Loew's Theatres setup, under Joseph R. Vogel and Leopold Friedman, also going into outside business ventures. When Leonard H. Goldenson took over United Paramount Theatres, under the Par divorcement, it merged with the ABC radio-tv network, as American Broadcasting-Paramount Theatres Inc., and reports were strong for a time that it would also add the DuMont network but that has not materialized. The Paramount film company is a large stockholder in DuMont.

Milton R. Rackmil, prexy of Decca and also of Universal Pictures, which is now 73% owned by Decca Records Inc., overwhelmingly won the dissident stockholders' move incepted by disgruntled ex-director Major George L. Lloyd. Incidentally this is Decca's 20th anniversary in business.

Pine-Thomas ("the two Bills"), long famed as "the keepers of the B's," priming their first $1,000,000 production in 14 years, in line with industry trends for "bigger" pix.

Exhibs Vs. The World

The perennial battle between the Hollywood production line and the exhibitors continues as the latter, particularly the rank-and-file independent theatre owners, are pleading for "more product to fill our screens." Several exhibitors, in desperation, have gone into production, notably among them Fred Schwartz's DCA (Distributors' Corp. of America) and H. R. Makelim, an independent producer with Allied States Assn. backing.

The major lots are content to "count" their blessings, insisting that only quality product, booked on special terms somewhat in the idiom of legit hits getting fancy boxoffice prices, can offset the tv inroads and the multiple competition for the public's pleasure hours. Unlike the wartime period, when Hollywood dominated up to 60c and 70c of the average amusement dollar, when automobiles, electric refrigeration, no television and kindred shortages of nonessential manufacturers' products left it wide open for the movie industry, today there are too many distractions. Not the least of it is the sports phase.

Only 11 1953-54 pictures made the golden circle. That is, $4,000,000 gross and over, of which "The Robe" was singularly outstanding with a $20,000,000-30,000,000; Columbia's "From Here To Eternity" with $12,500,000; Paramount's "Shane" with $8,000,000; 20th-Fox's second CinemaScope picture, "How to Marry a Millionaire" with $7,500,000; "Peter Pan" $7,000,000; "Hans Christian Andersen" $6,000,000; "House of Wax" $5,500,000; "Mogambo" $5,200,000; "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" $5,100,000; "Moulin Rouge" $5,000,000; "Salome" $4,750,000. "The Robe" thus becomes second to "Gone With The Wind" as the all-time grosser. The picture until last year had grossed $26,000,000, but figures to do another $7,500,000 on its fifth reissue this year.

Despite Hollywood's new dimensional look, it was notable that top Oscar honors went to two black-and-white pictures, "From Here To Eternity" and "Roman Holiday."

It was figured that film admission prices had upped 199% over the depression 1935-39 period, but many still regard "movies are your best and cheapest entertainment."

Incidentally, there have been varying estimates of the number of theatres and, despite the closings of many, the opening up of more drive-ins, including many for year-round operation, sees some 20,000 cinema emporiums in the U.S.

After Sam Goldwyn's $1,000,000 deal for "Guys and Dolls", Darryl F. Zanuck put $100,000 down for "The Greatest Story Ever Told", the life of Christ, by the late Fulton Oursler, a Catholic convert, with "an accumulative price of $2,000,000 set" with the executors of the author's estate.

The Protestant Church took positive action in its campaign that Hollywood was giving too much padre "casting" to the Catholic church and sponsored "Martin Luther" and "John Wesley". The former proved surprisingly big b.o. both in non-theatrical and theatrical exhibitions.

Film Code

The Hollywood production code came into constant spotlight as efforts were made to have post-midcentury standards projected with a more realistic cinematurgical approach to presentday standards. The industry, however, reaffirmed the value of the code and its own self-regulation but indicated that already there had been some realistic relaxations on miscegenation, for example, because pictures did show Negro and white GIs in juxtaposition; and where a drinking scene or "smuggling", another tabu, was pertinent to the action, it would be okayed.

As Italy and France were admonished to keep the Hollywood production code in mind, if to invade U.S. screens, American pix continued to new b.o. peaks abroad.

Samuel Goldwyn also steamed up the Production Code's limitations, coincidental with his reissue of "Best Years of Our Lives".

Mild click of "New Faces" and "Top Banana", low-budgeters, shot almost in their original legit format, started some wishful-thinking on filming more "original casts" and sending them on the road as one means of replacing "the road". Actually legit's "road" biz was booming.

"From Here To Eternity" was cited as not being particularly denatured even though the hulaland bordello was euphemistically labeled a dancehall and the girls "hostesses", a pleasant subterfuge which hurts nobody and impairs nothing.

Metro felt it could make Robert Anderson's "Tea and Sympathy" in film form and still have "the play's mature texture (homosexuality) followed closely". If the shooting script is approved, Deborah Kerr will recreate her stage original; Elia Kazan probably again direct; and possibly others from the stage original would be in the picture version.

Meantime Joseph I. Breen retired because of health and his longtime aide, Geoffrey Shurlock, succeeded. The trade will have to get used to "shurlocking" as it had to "joebreening" as a synonym for Code Production cuts.

Marilyn Monroe's derriere publicity shots set a vogue for other cheesecake; even Audrey Hepburn's "Sabrina" art gave it that over-the-left-shoulder look. The disk jockeys' corny gags about Eddie Fisher's "Fanny" (Harold Rome score) was something else again. Still another "look" was Christian Dior's reverting to the Jazz Age's "H-look", but it didn't materialize as "flat" as first pointed—but it did give the Paris couturier beaucoup cuffo space.

Cheap Way To Appraisal

Amidst the Howard Hughes high finance and reported dickers by Aristotle Onassis-Laurence Rockefeller syndicate to "buy out the entire package" for $387,000,000, the RKO company's 1953 net loss was $3,607,967. The corporate deficit to that time was $19,19,583. RKO film production was a standstill and it became a ghost lot but meantime Hughes had paid $6 a share for the outstanding 3,914,913 shares of RKO common stock ($23,500,000 in all) and Floyd Odlum (Atlas Investment Trust) reportedly had offered Hughes $7,572,720 for the RKO Pictures Corp. The "package deal", of course, meant Hughes' holdings in TWA, the Hughes Tool Co., oil wells, etc., with the objective being a Hughes Hospital Foundation. It's all still in the rumor stage at this writing.

The sum-total was that Hughes reportedly cracked, "Well, that was one way to get a free appraisal of my holdings". Spyros Skouras reportedly agented the proposal for the Greek-born Argentine shipping tycoon Onassis (who bought Monte Carlo).

(Look had a three-parter by Steven White kudosing Howard Hughes and Fortune almost coincidentally blasted him.)

There were the usual number of high executive echelon changes during 1954, some on demand of the Grim Reaper. Elmer C. Rhoden, vet National Theatres division exec (he long headed Fox-Midwesco in Kansas City), succeeded the late Charles P. Skouras, the Greek immigrant boy who became one of the Horatio Alger success stories of the 20th Century. Phil Reisman, ex-RKO veepee, first joined Joseph P. Kennedy enterprises and latterly aligned with Michael Todd Productions as prez of the outfit.

Juvenile Delinquency Concerns Show Business

The cops' crackdown on the Times Square weirdies, teenage gangs, reefer-happy punks and other undesirables was the beginning of N. Y. Police Commissioner Adams' tiptop job in putting fear into the hoodlum element. Extra details in the tough East Harlem, Brownsville and kindred belts were contrasted by the cops' own gripes that the sudden cycle of "rogue cop" films was not helping the nation's battle with juvenile delinquency.

The comics hired themselves former N. Y. Magistrate Charles F. Murphy as "czar" for self-regulation. Vidpix were the target for other "cleaning-up from within," on the theory that there was too much violence on tv, as well as radio. The fact that in the last

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1954 In Biz There Is None Like

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minutes, the crime-doesn't pay sermon is supposed to be the convincer, drew cynical observation that the punks are shown toiling not but spinning in beaucoup luxury, party girls, and the like until that final moment.

Pop songs of the "smooth" calibre, like "Make Yourself Comfortable" and "Teach Me Tonight" also got some attention while stations openly banned some of the rough out-and-out "baby" and "papa" and "rock-and-roll" recordings. These are dominantly of the Negro talent stable, formerly called Harlem or "race" records, and very unsubtle in their double-entendre.

Sentimental Events

Sentimental salutes of the year included veteran Broadway showman - playwright - songwriter-producer John Golden. His 80th birthday was marked by him gifting several acres of his Bayside (Long Island) estate for boys' baseball fields. It became something of a N. Y. civic event.

Winston Churchill's "finest hours" were celebrated in story, radio and tv, on his 80th birthday, with giant broadcasts of excerpts from his works. Meantime, his actress-daughter Sarah Churchill (married to photographer Anthony Beauchamp) was busy in U. S. tv and legit.

David O. Selznick and Louis B. Mayer blasted the Ed Sullivan-Dore Schary "Toast of the Town" telecast of "the Metro story" because it "robbed us of our credits," referring to "Gone With the Wind" (produced in the Selznick-Mayer regime, preceding Schary's advent). The tiff made a good trailer f · the film's reissue. Incidentally, at year's end, Selznich looked set back on the Metro lot as an autonomous indie, with M-G financing.

George Jean Nathan & Brando

Confirmed (48 years) bachelor, George Jean Nathan, at 71 announced his engagement to 44-year-old actress Julie Haydon with whom he had been "going steady" for 17 years, but the cautious critic set the date for some time in the middle of '55. Marlon Brando, another who subscribed to his own credo that "you ain't living if you don't know it," was likewise cautious on just when he and the 19-year-old Josano Mariani-Berenger, stepdaughter of a French fisherman, would wed, but when Brando came off the boat in what looked suspiciously like a Homburg (he claimed it was a "formal" Tyrolean hat) and a Bond Street-looking getup, instead of his heretofore trademarked T-shirt and slacks, the betting was strong that it could happen any minute.

Other romantic statistics of the year included the marriages of actresses Mitzi Gaynor and Jack Bean; Vera-Ellen and Victor Rothschild; Marilyn Maxwell and writer Jerry Davis; Pier Angeli and crooner Vic Damone.

NBC's tv spectaculars proved un-so, in some instances, but from RCA-NBC's viewpoint it has served its purpose. It focused public attention on color tv, and while the "Satins and Spurs" (Betty Hutton) debut spectrum spectacular—costing around $300,000 for that hour-and-a-half show—got a 31.8 rating Nielsen against Ed Sullivan's "Toast of the Town" with 40.8, RCA expressed itself satisfied. Sullivan has long been a thorn to NBC's Colgate Comedy Hour, and the web even made a pitch for the columnist-emcee, resulting only in CBS giving Sullivan a 20-year "lifetime" deal.

Spectacularism worked in reverse against CBS also when its $100,000 "Best of Broadway" colorcast found itself only a couple of "points" over Ralph Edwards' "This Is Your Life" doing a third repeat of the Lillian Roth "true confession."

That Video Pressure

Hollywood personalities making itinerant guest appearances on New York tv shows were heard more and more commenting on the pressure that these regular video formats seem to accept as occupational disease. Near-physical collapses of stars like Milton Berle, Jackie Gleason and Martha Raye further substantiated this premise. However, the tv impact will see an increasing parade of Hollywood personalities on such regular video programs as the G.E. Theatre, among those slated for 1955 appearance are James Stewart, Henry Fonda, Ronald Reagan, Jack Benny, James Dunn, Myrna Loy, Alan Ladd, Eddie Albert, James Dean, Joan Crawford, Jane Wyman, Barry Fitzgerald and Joseph Cotten.

A tv first was CBS' telecast of a Cabinet meeting when Secretary of State John Foster Dulles reported to the President on the signing of the Western European Defense Pact.

CBS prexy Frank Stanton essayed another first, that of "editorializing," and when the network's Ed Murrow did the Joe McCarthy story it gave "equal time" to the Senator who, however, "produced" his rebuttal on film. It became a question of cost, Alcoa refusing to defray the cost so CBS picked up McCarthy's $6,000 film production tab.

Fee Television

Eugene F. McDonald Jr.'s Zenith Radio Corp. fired a $5,000,000 antitrust suit at RCA, Westinghouse, Western Electric, et al.—RCA retained Adlai E. Stevenson as defense counsel. RCA board chairman David Sarnoff has long deprecated "tollvision" as impractical. Paramount's Telemeter experiment in Palm Springs was temporarily suspended, and Matty Fox's MPTV (Motion Pictures for Television) had tied in with Arthur J. Levey's Skiatron, with an eye to getting the tollvision idea, per se, off the ground.

Meantime closed-circuit theatre television was pyramiding mostly under the aegis of (1) Nate Halpern's TNT (Theatre Network Television), the (2) BOT (Box Office Television) outfit, and one or two others.

Theatre tv looked best when the Marciano-Ezzard Charles fight returns envisioned a possible revival of the $1,000,000 gates which Tex Riekard promoted. That as it may be. Actually it grossed only half that. Among the 63 major key city theatres subscribing there were included 12 drive-ins, some charging a flat $10 and $15 a carload.

Paramount veepee Paul Raibourn estimated it would cost $350,000,000 to blanket the U.S. for Telemeter (pay-as-you-see home television). Meantime the company's Palm Springs (Calif.) experiment has bogged down. Exhibitors, of course, frown on the major film companies cooperating in any closed-circuit theatre tv venture, despite Zenith Radio prexy Cmdr. Eugene F. McDonald Jr.'s renewed pitch for same.

There were rumbles in 1954 of 20th-Fox reviving Eidophor (theatre tv) as its next pitch to follow CinemaScope.

BOT (Boxoffice Television) pitching for "Seven Year Itch" as the first Broadway hit for a closed-circuit tv pickup.

More Showmen-Authors

Since "Show Biz (From Vaude to Video)," by Abel Green and Joe Laurie Jr., credited in publishers' circles with putting show biz books back onto the bestsellers, there has been a parade of such works, chiefly autoblographical, including the more sensational items by Ethel Waters and Tallulah Bankhead. This year saw memoirs by show biz and journalistic personalities like Fred Allen, Bob Hope, Ben Hecht, Elsa Maxwell, Hy Gardner, Robert Sylvester, Jimmy Powers, Louis Kronenberger, John Chapman, George Nathan (latter three are annual anthologists), Arthur Marx's closeup on life with father, "Groucho" (with the comedian humorously footnoting some of his son's observations), Paris expatriate Art Buchwald, Broadway publicist Bernard Sobel, Ben Gross, radio memoirs, the Mack Sennett story by Cameron Shipp, another segment of Noel Coward's memoirs, the John Murray Anderson bio, Richard Aldrich's tender biog on his wife, Gertrude Lawrence.

Yank Impact on Show Biz On All Global Fronts

After Eurovision's click teeoff, the prophets foresaw global television in 10 years. Looping of a number of Continental countries for international exchange of programs was called by some as "the best diplomatic move to coexist in peace because, if one sees the talents that his neighboring country has to offer, he must perforce better understand that neighbor." The Coronation telecasts in '53 from London to Paris had spurred the Eurovision ideas as a general programming technique.

Everybody's getting into the Film Festival act—Sao Paulo, Tokyo, Acupulco, Venezuela, Venice, Cannes, Berlin—but Hollywood itself stays coyly aloof.

In Britain, new selection methods were decided upon after Metro's "Beau Brummell" was not hailed as the ideal Performance film with the Royal Family in attendance.

Broadway Legit Boom Holds Despite Costs

This fall, the Broadway drama critics, in an endeavor to help legit, were surprising the profession with their own brand of "humility" in not being too tough, but it didn't last too long—they still call 'em as they see 'em.

Audray Hepburn's boffo impact in "Ondine" was a Broadway highlight. She eventually married her leading man, Mel Ferrer.

Ina Claire marked her Broadway return in many years in T. S. Eliot's "The Confidential Clerk," another of those London hits which didn't make it on Broadway. Paradoxically, despite the downbeat Broadway "wise" rumors that Sandy Wilson's "The Girl Friend" could never repeat its West End click, it fooled everybody. Somehow the "Charleston-era" musical got a unanimous set of favorable notices—another manifestation of those aisle-sitters' new-found "humility"?—and thus beeame the first British musical to click in America since Andre Charlot's Revue and Noel Coward's "Bitter Sweet," of the 1920s. Incidentally, Charlot is currently residing in Hollywood, working on his memoirs. Agatha Christie's whodunit, "Witness for the Prosecution," repeated its London elick on Broadway at year-end.

Mary Boland was another to do a comeback in "Lullaby," which likewise didn't last.

Ruth Draper and Victor Borge's "one-man" shows were concurrent, for a time, but the "great Dane's" smash tour-de-foree continued alone in its second season until Miss Draper's annual winter return this month. He holds the Broadway mark for such single-handed legit recitals, far outdistanceing anything by Beatriee Lillie, Miss Draper, et al.

Some High Finance

Cole Porter's "Can-Can," now in its second year, had grossed over $4,000,000 and was netting $10,000 a week profit. "Pajama Game," which cost a relatively light (for a musical) $190,000, and needs $31,000 a week to break was netting $12,000 on its steady $52,000 gross. "Fanny," one of the costliest legit musicals, came in with a $265,000 production, needs the staggering $34,000 a week to break but has been grossing $66,000 weekly and netting $19,000 a week. "Kismet" netted $100,000 on its first year's operation.

On the other hand, December saw eight Broadway foldos in two weeks involving a $693,000 net loss to shows like "By the Beautiful Sea," "Fragile Fox," "King of Hearts," and "One Eye Closed," "Abie's Irish Rose" (an illtimed revival), "Hit the Trail," "Living Room" and Rodgers & Hart's "On Your Toes" revival with Vera Zorina.

Two out-of-town folderoos cost "Hello Paree" and "School for Brides" $90,000 in the red.

Billy Rose's production of Andre Gide's "The Immoralist" on the heels of the click of "Tea and Sympathy" revived the gag about "Old Homo Week" on Broadway.

More Personality Stuff

Lynn Fontanne's elick in "Quadrille" opposite husband Alfred Lunt surprised many of her perennial youthful stage appearances, because World Almanac statistics place her birth at 1887, making her easily "the youngest 67" in show biz, or anywhere.

Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess" booked for Feb. 21, 1955, at La Scala, Milan, the first American company, grand or jazz opera, to appear in its sacred environs.

Danny Kaye barnstormed around the world, ineluding a vaude stint in Johannesburg, South Africa, and a big click, incidentally, on behalf of United Nations' Child Relief—and coincidentally plugging his own Paramount picture, "Knock On Wood."

Jackie Gleason's fractured ankle got as much publicity as Arthur Godfrey's hip or DiMaggio's Marilyn. And his $11,000,000 Buick deal (succeeding Milton Berle's sponsor) even more so.

Sid Caesar and Imogene Coca went their separate ways with separate tv shows—and there are reports of ultimate reunion.

Lee Shubert's will stirred a storm, surviving brother J. J., Lee's son John, and Milton Shubert clashing.

Playwright Eugene O'Neill's daughter Oona (Mrs. Charles Chaplin) also assumed British citizenship with her repatriated husband, who foresook Hollywood and American barbs, because of his leftist political tendencies. Ineidentally, while his last picture, "Limelight," was blacked-out by public opinion, American Legion protests, and the like, it clicked big abroad. And not only did "Terry's Theme," from "Limelight" become an American pop song hit, but an old theme, "Smile," from Chaplin's yesteryear "Modern Times" film, became a diseliek and a Hit Parade item. At least, in America, there is no embargo on music, in contradiction to the Nazi regime's blackout on Gershwin, Kern, Berlin, Romberg, et al.

Ncel Coward's wartime satirical song, "Don't be Beastly To The Germans", is now kidding-on-the-square, now that the Japs and the Bonn government are wooed, either for economic or military defense reasons, or both. The Motion Picture Export Assn. incepted a pattern of "previewing films with World War II themes in order to spare Jam or German sensitiviiies. Obviously, films like "Task Force" were not the pleasantest souvenirs when shown Japanese audiences.

This was the year, too, when the German National Anthem was played in Madison Square Garden for the first time since 1936, during the Horse Show . . . and Premier S. Higaru Yoshida of Japan (since displaced), was greeted by General Douglas MacArthur as "my old friend." Incidentally, Yoshida, spearhead of the Pearl Harbor sneak attack on Dec. 7, 1941, knocked off $100,000,000 in U. S. aid.

Vaudeville A Dead Issue

Vaudeville was a dead issue. The sentimentalists every so often would respond to a Betty Hutton or a Judy Garland in a glorified version of "the two-a day"; Julius LaRosa did a special fortnight at Loew's State; Jackie Gleason dittoed over the Thanksgiving fortnight at the Broadway Paramount. But vaudeville repeated its pattern since the demise of the medium per se; that is, it went underground or into the air, because the niteries and broadcasting (radio and video) are today's variety outlets.

"The saloons", as colloquially called in the trade, pay vaudevilians better than anything in the heyday of the Palace and the so-called "big time", especially if there are casinos attached, as in Las Vegas and Reno, and in other spots surreplitiously, Florida, no longer "wide open", is also a fabulous seasonal employment centre.

Among the variety personalities there was a pattern of two-are-better-than-one. Hildegarde, long-time a single, teamed with Johnny Johnston and later with Jack Whiting, the perennial Broadway musical comedy juvenile who made his nitery debut successfully. In the same idiom, Peter Lind Hayes and Mary Healy (his wife in private life), Anne Jeffreys and Robert Sterling (another Mr. & Mrs.), Rose Marie and Lenny Kent, followed in the pattern set when Dean Martin & Jerry Lewis and the sisters Jane & Betty Kean found they could do better paired than solo. The Keans' comedy click was another of the season's standouts. (Rose Marie and Kent recently returned to single status).

Las Vegas was denting Miami Beach and in fact several Florida hotel and nitery operators were shifting to Nevada.

Palm Springs yenned for gambling, claiming Las Vegas was kayoing the desert resort (which, however, continued booming); and, periodically, Mexican-American operators talked of reopening Tia Juana and Agua Caliente on a plush operation basis, as antidote to Nevada. In between, a blast at the alleged gangster-controlled syndicates in Las Vegas and Reno hotel-casino operations got the spotlight.

Walt Disney's seven-year deal with ABC-TV made history.

TV playwrights' fees soared, with paucity of scripts; Phileo is paying up to $3,000.

Radio-tv editor Jack Gould resigned from the N. Y. Times to join the CBS brass as "information" director but soon returned to his untrammeled career as a critic on the paper—didn't like the Madison Ave. chromium environment.

Uncle Sam didn't think well enough of Porifiro Rubirosa's potential as an actor to approve a work permit for him in a picture opposite Zsa Zsa Gabor.

Dick Haymes' immigration headaches coineided with his wife, Rita Hayworth's legal hassle with ex-husband Aly Khan for "adequate" support. Their little Jasmin now is in line to inherit one of the world's largest fortunes, having been adjudieated one of the Aga Khan's heirs. Meantime Dick & Rita ("have headaches, • can't travel") had to nix a $14,000 joint British bid for vaudeville personals. Gene Tierney and Khan continued in the headlines.

Burlesque strlpperies were thriving in Jersey but kayoed in N.Y. Meantime New York's Strip Row (52d St.) is a ghost rue as the clip-joints made room for an extension of the Rockefeller Center's office building development.

Shoestring film producers were peddling burleycue strips in 3-D.

For a time New York earlier this year loomed a weekend town but pretty soon the public digested the 25% surcharges—20% Federal and 5% N.Y. City sales tax—and Gotham has been booming. None the less, the niteries devised sundry techniques to beat the 20% rap, such as dinner music (no dancing) in hotels until 9 or even 10, with the tax only going on when the hoofology music and/or floorshow started.

Incidentally, it's all right to pay the tab before the entertainment starts, as a means to duck that 20% cabaret bite, but Internal Revenue ruled that if the patron stays on to the show, even with the check paid, that's an illegal subterfuge. Some bonifaces were pushing the $5 package dinner idea (floorshow plus one free drink) as a biz hypo.

Comedian Sir George Robey, knighted less than a year, died at 85 in England. Charles Chaplain's "tramp" is said to have been modeled after Robey's stage getup.

Time Inc. (Luce) founded Sports Illustrated as a new semi-monthly. Walter Winchell called it "Flair, with muscles."

Helen Hayes wasn't sure 1955 was her 50th anniversary as an actress; but she started in the theatre around age five.

Broadcasters started to look askance at the flock of picture and play title songs ("Kismet", "Wish You Were Here", "It's A Woman's World", "Three Coins In The Fountain," "The High and The Mighty," 'Vera Cruz," "Fanny," "Song From Desiree", "Song from The Moulin Rouge", etc.) as a musical gimmick for cuffo commercials on radio-tv.

Rewriting A Hit

The Broadway adage "don't try to rewrite a hit" was proved and disproved on several occasions. Joshua Logan and Arthur Kober's intensive rescripting of "Wish You Were Here" made it a continuing improved show, despite its mixed notices (mostly negative), and Logan essayed that again, following the preem of "Fanny". Based on the Marcel Pagnol trilogy, it represents a - more - than - $300,000 legit investment which, however, looks to be an underwritten hit because of an advance sale which was some $70,000 less than $1,000,000 before its Broadway premiere. (These large advances are often not as rosy and money-in-the-bank as they might appear because, should a show do a sudden floppo, it can result in beaucoup returns.) "Fanny," however has been averaging $66,000 capacity, including standees, and is realizing a fancy $2,000 weekly net operating profit.

Where tampering with a hit did prove somewhat disturbing was bringing the off-Broadway Phoenix Theatre's "The Golden Apple" uptown last spring. At that time it was the first new musical to click since "Kismet" and "Wonderful Town". John Murray Anderson's "Almanac" had also opened but was destined to wind up $200,000 in the red. Since "Apple", of course, such smashes as "Pajama Game" came on the summer scene.

(Continued on page 88)

SEASON'S GREETINGS

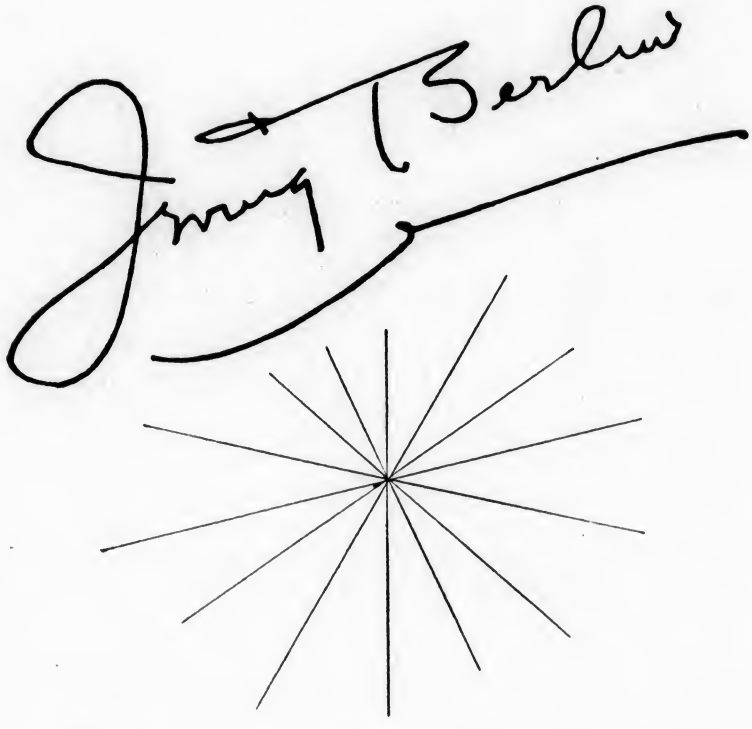
ARTHUR FREED

M - G - M

Greetings

MR. and MRS. DAMONE

Pier and Vic



"White Christmas"

and

"There's No Business
Like Show Business"

ROY ROWLAND

DIRECTOR

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HIT THE DECK

M-G-M

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Choreographer

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TO:—Mel Shavelson—for his fine direction.

"THE SEVEN LITTLE FOYS"

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"THE SEVEN LITTLE FOYS"

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The Raiders

Season's Greetings

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1906 1955

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MUSICAL DIRECTOR

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Congratulations!

RKO THEATRES —from Coast to Coast

1954 In Biz There Is None Like

Continued from page 71

This past fall saw "Fanny" a smash, and much promise for the out-of-town "Silk Stockings" (by Cole Porter and George S. Kaufman and his wife, Leueen McGrath) and "House of Flowers" by Truman Capote and Harold Arlen). Arlen, incidentally, was living a personal battle, working against a deadline premiere despite serious illness which saw him in and out of several hospitals on several occasions.

"Pal Joey" made news in England because Princess Margaret Rose had been making a habit of seeing out-of-town musicals before their West End premiere, as she did with "Guys and Dolls." She noticed that the lyrics of the 14-year-old musical by Rodgers & Hart had been sapolioed a bit—Lorenz Hart's wordage was considered too saucy for royalty.

Kudos and Awards

VARIETY's annual poll of the N. Y. drama critics in June came up with Deborah Kerr ("Tea and Sympathy") and Audrey Hepburn ("Ondine") tied for best actress; Lloyd Nolan ("Caine Mutiny Court Martial") for best actor; Shirley Booth ("By The Beautiful Sea") and Jeanmaire ("Girl In The Pink Tights" tied for the best femme musical player; Alfred Drake's "Kismet" the best male in musicals.

Meantime, George R. Marek, RCA Victor's manager of artists & repertoire, conceived the idea of utilizing name legit players like Dennis King, Joseph Cotten, Deborah Kerr, Eva Le Gallienne, John Kerr to make "operas sung and played" palatable to an enlarged middlebrow audience which, hearing the great voices sing the Italian and French librettos, will understand them better if these name legiters dramatized the libretto action on the reverse side.

The Tonys (named for Antoinette Perry) of 1954 went to "Teahouse of the August Moon" and "Kismet" for best straight play and musical; and to Audrey Hepburn, David Wayne, Dolores Gray and Alfred Drake for best performances in straight plays and musicals. Miss Gray got the nod despite the untimely demise of her "Carnival In Flanders."

"From Here to Eternity" swept the Oscars with eight awards, including Frank Sinatra and Donna Reed for best supporting players; Fred Zinnemann for best direction; Daniel Taradash for best screenplay; Burnett Guffey for best black and white photography; along with other kudos for the editing and recording. Audrey Hepburn ("Roman Holiday") and William Holden ("Stalag 17"), both Paramount pictures, were the best players; Sammy Fain and Paul Francis Webster's "Secret Love" got the nod as the best song (it was from Warner Bros.' "Calamity Jane" and nosed out "That's Amore," "The Sadie Thompson Theme," "The Moon is Blue" and "My Foolish Heart"). George Stevens got the coveted Irving Thalberg award for best all-round achievement; 20th-Fox got a special kudo for introducing CinemaScope as an important new technique to the industry. The most popular choice was Sinatra—it was rousingly cheered across the nation as it looked in on the proceedings from the Pantages Theatre, in Holiywood. It proved largely instrumental in Frank Sinatra's "comeback," another instance of a trouper to punctuate his career anew.

Marian Anderson At The Met

Marian Anderson became the first Negro singer signed to sing at the Met in its 70-year history. She'll do Verdi's "A Masked Ball" this month (Jan. 7) as Ulrica. Another Met Opera first incidentally is Dimitri Mitropoulos batoning there for the first time.

The courage of Sammy Davis Jr. captured public and industry imagination following the auto accident which cost him the sight of his left eye. Betty Hutton came out of her just-announced "retirement" to pinchhit for one night at El Rancho Vegas, as did other names. The young colored mimic had been driving on Sunday, in between his Vegas dates, to cut a record in Hollywood when the accident occurred.

Betty Hutton, before her "retirement," tried the two-a-night show format at the Capitol, Washington, a la the London Palladium idea, as did Martha Raye. (Somehow this never went in America, which has sporadically attempted 9 to 10 o'clock curtains to lure fashionably late diners. Meantime the 8 p.m. legit curtain has expired, except at opening nights and then only as a sop to the drama critics who must catch a.m. daily deadlines).

Cleo Moore marathon-kissed a Chicago disk jockey into losing his job, and Terry Moore essayed a "Dietrich-type" (nude bodice) gown at her Las Vegas debut.

Mae West whammed out $92,000 a week at Lou Walters' Latin Quarter (N.Y.), with her male beauty parade (muscle men who were of the Charles Atlas and Lionel Strongfort school) and proved a sexsational click in Vegas also.

Bing Crosby made his tv debut and also blasted the disk jockey influence in a Look mag yarn that got beaucoup attention. Gary Crosby summer-replaced pop Bing on radio.

CBS' Ed Murrow interviewed RCA board chairman David Sarnoff on his "Person to Person" show, and in fact did so many RCA-NBC personalities that CBS burned.

The Radio City's Center Theatre was razed in 1954 to become an office addition to the U.S. Rubber Bldg. adjoining it. A longtime white elephant.

With "Me and Juliet" closing, it marked the first time in their 11-year collaboration, dating from "Oklahoma!", that Rodgers & Hammerstein were not represented as authors or producers on Broadway.

Margaret Truman's B.O.

Strawhat biz was best in years with personalities like Tallulah Bankhead, Faye Emerson, Margaret Truman and Imogene Coca particularly boffo b.o.

While ex-President Harry S. Truman was ailing, daughter Margaret, in the show-must-go-on tradition, was doing OK b.o. in "The Autumn Crocus" at $1,500 weekly guarantees, plus 50%, averaging 2G a week. With her NBC-TV guarantee for a series of spectaculars (gain with Jimmy Durante and also with Martha Raye) she was grossing over $100,000, or more

(Continued on page 90)

Season's Greetings

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An institution known throughout the world for its presentation of outstanding motion pictures and stage shows notable for their good taste, beauty and perfection of execution.

THE RITZ BROTHERS

Management LOU IRWIN

1954 In Biz There Is None Like

Continued from page 88

than her Pop did when he was in the White House.

The 40th anniversary dinner of ASCAP saluted vet songsmiths Joe E. Howard, Ernie Burnett, Alfred Bryan, Jack Norworth, George W. Meyer, Leo Edwards, Harry Tierney and William C. Handy. But Irving Berlin's own salute to his "little colored boy" stole the show.

ASCAP marked this milestone with a special 40th anniversary edition of VARIETY which traced the evolution of Tin Pan into "Gold Pan Alley." The Society's $17,000,000 royalty melon—with sights on $20,000,000 annual income for performing rights distribution — was a long way from the visionary Victor Herbert, George Maxwell, et al. when ASCAP was formed over a Luchow's dinnertable in 1914. The first "melon" was not to be distributed until 1921. It was a meagre $24,000.

Radio and tv staged a series of periodic salutes to the music men and in addition there were such spectaculars as the Rodgers & Hammerstein super-telecast by General Foods, when an estimated 70,000,000 lookers saw it. Irving Berlin conceded he had been approached on a $1,000,000-budgeted, two-hour telecast with Eddie Fisher—who is slated to star in a new Berlin legit musical—prominent in the proceedings.

Sneaking of 40th anni's, the Friars toasted George Jessel's 40th year in show biz with a super-dinner at the Waldorf last February and will ditto Martin & Lewis next.

Spectaculars of Another Sort

For the first time in years there was no Rodgers & Hammerstein show on Broadway in 1954 but General Foods' saluted their 11-year partnership and the sponsor's 25th anniversary with a show that cost $1,100,000, including all preemptions, as it occupied 90 minutes of all tv networks.

Show included Mary Martin, Ezio Pinza, Tony Martin, Yul Brynner, Patricia Morison, John Raitt, Jack Benny, Groucho Marx, Edgar Bergen & Charlie McCarthy and Ed Sullivan, and came three days after the March 25 of the Oscarcast of the Academy awards.

It hurt the film boxoffices on both Tuesday and Sunday nights, and exhibitors wanted to know why Hollywood didn't sponsor its own annual "bigshow" and perhaps utilize the concentrated national interest in furthering the still nervous b.o. situation.

For the first time, the 1954 World Series was seen on tv in every one of the 48 states, plus eight Canadian stations. Gillette Safety Razor's bill for the combined radio-telecast was $1,750,000, and there was an audience potential of 90,000,000 per game. The wonder Giants' four-straight win over the touted Cleveland team was another mark of the year, as was that British medical student, Roger Bannister's breaking of the 4-minute mile record. Not forgetting the amazing Willie Mays who made "Say hey" a national catchphrase—and also inspired a rash of "Say Hey" songs, none of which clicked, including the outfielder's own disk version for Epic Records.

TV's First 'Act of God'

"Blackstone and Blue Cross are going to go through some hard hassles", observed VARIETY, before the Ruth Gilbert ("Maxie")-Milton Berle situation is ironed out. She's the first "Act of God" case in television, where motherhood interrupted her professional career. As "Maxie," the breathless secretarial pursuer of her boss, Berle, it further made her obvious enceinte condition awkward scripting. Incidentally, the first legit "Act of God" baby, the late Mary MacArthur, who died a polio victim, is being memorialized with a continuing campaign for a foundation named in the girl's honor.

"Life" continued to live it up on tv, including a longevity marathon of shows such "Life Is Worth Living," the Bishop Sheen series; Ralph Edwards' "This Is Your Life"; Groucho Marx's "You Bet Your Life"; William Bendix's "Life of Riley"; daytime serials "Portia Faces Life" and "Love of Life"; whodunit "I Led Three Lives"; "Life With Elizabeth" and "Life Begins at 80". And the daytime radio soap opera, "Life Can Be Beautiful".

Chevalier OK'd

Maurice Chevalier's frank letters to VARIETY that he knows nothing of politics and couldn't understand State Dept. frown on his U.S. visa apparently bore fruit and he's slated for an American visit in '55. He "came" to the U.S. vicariously via Bob Hope's telecast in December via a tv show filmed in London, with the French "lip" and Beatrice Lillie, among others, participating.

In 1954 playwright Arthur Miller ("Death of a Salesman", "All My Sons" and "The Crucible") was denied a U.S. passport to inspect European reproductions of his plays, and Paul Robeson again was not granted one.

Time Marches On

Necrology of the year included Essanay film pioneer George K. Spoor, Will H. Hays, the first "czar" of the picture business; Cinerama pioneer Fred Waller, standout "Horatio Alger" showman Charles P. Skouras; theatre architect John Eberson; showman Samuel E. Morris, Louis Weinberg, Joe Bernhard, Eddie Aaron and Henry Randel. Joseph Curtis (son of Columbia Pictures' exec veepee Jack Cohn), Joe Unger, French author Sidonie Gabrielle Colette, 81; agent Paul Small at 45; vet Victor recording artist Billy Murray, 77; producer-director Gabriel Pascal who first induced George Bernard Shaw to approve his plays for pix, at 56; playwright Lynn Riggs, whose "Green Grow The Lilacs" inspired the "Oklahoma" smash, at 54; Leonard Goldstein, prodigious "boy film producer", at 51, while conferring with Darryl F. Zanuck and Spyros Skouras in Hollywood. (His twin brother Robert is continuing the Leonard Goldstein Productions, indie setup); legit producer John Murray Anderson; director Irving Pichel, 60; gagman Barney Dean, w.k. "court jester" to Bob Hope and Bing Crosby, at 50; cartoonist Bud (Ham) Fisher, 69; actors Henry Hobart, Eugene Pallette at 65 and Lionel Barrymore at 78; songsmiths E. Ray Goetz, 68, and music publisher Will Rossiter, 87; CBS newcaster Don Hollenbeck, a suicide at 49; Gladys George, 50; Mrs. Bing Crosby (Dixie Lee).

Among the newspapermen casualties of the year were N. Y. Daily Mirror editor Jack Lait (who headed the Chicago office of this paper at one time); author-comedian Joe Laurie Jr., another longtime VARIETY associate; Walter Howey, another great Hearst editor and the prototype of Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur's "Front Page" hero; N.Y. Post drama critic Vernon Rice; exploiteers and former newshawks Ben Serkowich and Harry Reiners; film-historian Tarry Ramsaye; war correspondent Josef Israels 2d, longtime rep for VARIETY in Vienna, at 48; Canadian tradepaper publisher Mrs. Ray Lewis; dean of sports writers Grantland Rice at 73 (his posthumously published memoirs, "The Tumult and the Shouting" is a current bestseller).

Joe Laurie Jr., who died at 62, wrote an unusual "human document" will, including the willing of his eyes to the eye bank. (His gag collection has gone to the N.Y. Public Library). In somewhat the same idiom vet theatre manager Nick Holde farewelled, "My dear friends, yesterday I died, survived by most dearly beloved wife, Daisy Virginia . . ." He was 71, long ailing, and knew his days were numbered.

A SCAR IS BORN

By ART MOGER

(*WB Pictures' New England Fieldman*)

Boston.

"Sticks and stones may break my bones
"But names will never hurt me!"

After appearing in the recent bestseller, "The Compleat Practical Joker," by H. Allen Smith, in which he informed millions of readers about my invention of the little fictional character, Sam Mitnik (first chronicled in VARIETY), no one stopped me on the street and pointed a finger, shouting: "Look, there goes the guy you read about in H. Allen Smith's book!"

What! No Fanfare?

No fanfare accompanies my obtaining suites for visiting celebrities, when rooms are not to be had. I have yet to be called an agent or a talent scout, even though one of the stellar roles in Warner Bros. production of "Mr. Roberts" is being enacted by a young man who never expected to be an actor. One evening, this handsome ex-marine went to a preview in New Bedford, Mass., with his uncle. The manager told him how handsome he was and remarked: "You ought to be in motion pictures!"

"So why don't you get me into pictures?" was the answer.

A call was made to me, who, in turn set the wheels of contacts moving, with the result that Eugene Carey became Phil Carey and a film star. He's "Mannion" in "Mr. Roberts."

ASCAP hasn't sent me any bouquets for such unpublished songs as "When I'm With You, Dear, I'm Lonesome" or "When It's Air Raid Time In Boston, I'll Find Shelter In Your Arms, Dear, Blues." I have yet to overhear neighbors whispering "There goes that songwriter!"

When "Willie, the Whale," the mammalian behemoth who plays leapfrog off the New England shores every summer, was sighted by millions of beachgoers just as Warner Bros. launched its "The Beast From 20,000 Fathoms," the directors of the aquarium didn't pen any nickname onto me, which stuck.

Other Achievements

My corny one-liine jokes, in such syndicated columns as Earl Wilson's, don't entitle me to be glorified in words, as: "That famous one-liner." (A sample one-line: One monkey says to another: "You're a CHIMP off the old block!").

When I discovered that by adding yeast to wood pulp, the pages of pressbooks would turn automatically, my fellow pressagents didn't vote me "Mr. Genius, U.S.A.". Frequent appearances before Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions' Clubs, speaking about the great mass appeal of films, didn't net me any titles which have supplanted my given Christian name.

Many years ago, as a sophomore at Boston U.'s College of Journalism, I was the art editor of the defunct Boston U. Beanpot, a humorous monthly magazine. My first assignment was to draw a cover for the publication.

My design showed a professor with two girls of questionable character (one newspaper editor described them as having "no character at all"). The silhouet of each girl was that of a "flour bag." The connotation of the word "bag" is obvious. Above the head of the professor was a shining light, with the lettering: "Rue de la PAY 25c"; the price of the magazine. Coincidently, the professor looked exactly like the Dean of Men. The title of the cover was called "Sabbatical Leave." It just so happened that the professor (I swear I had never seen him before) was on *his* Sabbatical leave, in France, at the time!

A Boff 'Ban'

Well, sir, when word got out that such a cover had been "banned," requests from all over collegedom came for the most famous drawing since Toulous Lautrec's masterpieces.

Newspaper headlines screamed about the "banned" covers! Reproductions sprung up everywhere. Original cover designs, which had been replaced with a blank cover, were secretly smuggled into fraternity and sorority houses, where they were zealously guarded.

People all over the campus pointed to me as "That's the guy who drew that cover that was banned!" or "*That* cartoonist!"

That was almost 25 years ago. Last week, I was introduced to a president of a large communications' company. When my name was mentioned, he pondered a little and said: "Not, *that* famous cartoonist?"

Well, you could have knocked me down with a row of flicked chicken feathers! For a little mistake I made while I was in college, I'll probably have to go through life with the scar of infamy and the never-to-be-forgotten nickname of "*that* cartoonist"!

Bad? I should say so, because protests were raised by the National Assn. of Cartoonists, who have examined my pen and ink creations and maintain that the cartoonist's title is a great mistake.

To prove what they mean, they sent me a picture of Al ("Li'l Abner") Capp and myself captioned: "The Shmoo meets the Schmo"!

Season's Greetings

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LINICK &
SCHAEFER

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RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL
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"DEEP IN MY HEART"
In Glorious COLOR starring
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and The Music Hall's Great Christmas Stage Show

WARNER BROS. presents
THE SILVER CHALICE
THOMAS B. COSTAIN'S
CINEMASCOPE • WARNERCOLOR
starring
VIRGINIA MAYO • PIER ANGELI • JACK PALANCE • PAUL NEWMAN
PARAMOUNT BWAY AT 43rd ST.

Telecasters Decry N.Y.-H'wood 'Monopoly' On Originations In 'Get Out Of Town' Bid

Station Operators Around Country Appeal To Networks To 'Unchain Your Cameras and Broaden Your Vistas' Toward Bringing The 'Real' America To The Home Audience; Creative Brains, They Say, Has Never Been the Exclusive Birthright of the N.Y.-L.A. Coastal Cities

By GEORGE ROSEN

America's telecasters are taking up the "get out of town" battle cry in earnest. From New Orleans and Philadelphia, from St. Louis and Miami, from Nashville and from Denver and, in fact, from points north, south, east and west on the coaxial circuits the guardians and trustees of the video spectrum salute the new year as one —each with the fervent hope that '55 will find the television networks catching up with the "holy trail of maturity."

The time has come, they say, to show all of America to its citizens. The Hollywood and New York settings, they lament, are growing stale from overuse. Granted, they argue, that N.Y. and L.A. have long been recognized as the two major centers of show business and, as such, are voluminously "stocked" with television personnel. Yet who is to say that these two major production centers have a monopoly on creative talent or ingenuity?

By all means, say the boys from the hinterlands, get out of town . . . lengthen your vistas . . . unchain your cameras . . . portray the culture of the country as a whole . . . break through the barrier of the norm . . . you may find it less sophisticated, but you'll capture the great charm and the local enthusiasm inherent along the highways and the byways.

When, a few weeks back, VARIETY sounded the "Get Out of Town" clarion call and bannered the wish that network tv no longer restrict its vision to New York or Hollywood, it was merely echoing the longfelt sentiments of broadcasters all to cognizant of the fatal mistake made by radio in its failure to head the call of the hinterland. For years the "out of town" managers were warning that "you can't run a network of two stations"; that the off-the-beaten explorations were essential to get network radio out of its johnny-one-note origination rut and capture the feel and the culture of the nation as a whole. But radio, in the days when it counted, settled in its N.Y.-L.A. tracks.

Terry Not Too Optimistic

Thus, Hugh Terry, the KLZ-TV managerial factotum in Denver, for example, begs to be excused if he fails to wax too optimistic over the chances of the networks embracing the "get out of town" concept. Terry for years had been an advocate of the radio networks taking more originations "to the people" ("Remember," he writes, "VARIETY did a story on it years ago.")

Hugh Terry

But although Terry continues to wave aloft the "come on out" origination banner, "since obviously the community would welcome such recognition," his answer lies in his own reflection that "the networks were slow to accept the idea in radio, which in retrospect was a very simple procedure in contrast to the great problems in tv." Nonetheless Terry concedes there are many type network shows that are adaptable to out-of-town facilities and urges the networks to get moving.

That there are a multiplicity of problems that would have to be hurdled in an effort to get off the "tv centralization" hook is recognized by the telecasters, particularly as it pertains to the economic factor. But one and all concede that it can and should be done—"and the sooner the better." The networks themselves have been more or less tentative in their approach to the problem, which for the most part remains in the blueprint stage as, for example, Pat Weaver's "Wide Wide World" conception. A "Home," "Today" or a "Tonight" have made the most ambitious "get-out-of-town" thrusts thus far in the quest for local color, but at best these are one-shots—a far cry from getting at the heart of the matter and bringing to fruition present-day variations of the no-longer-existing "Chicago technique" on tv originations.

When VARIETY only recently heralded the likelihood of NBC moving its cameras into Margo Jones' theatre-in-the-round to permit the nation as a whole to witness Texas-brand dramatics, it didn't require a "Dallas papers please note" appendage to the story for the local dailies to take up the cause and recognize the potential of showing Texas-bred thesping to the American citizenry.

It's 'What,' Not 'Where': Burbach

George Burbach, the knowledgable and discerning operator of KSD-TV, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch station, brings up one of the most enlightening points of all. "Let us recognize," he says, "that the most important question concerning the originations of network program is "WHAT?" and not "WHERE?". The primary concern, if not obligation, of the networks should be the best possible programming it can present to the television (or radio) audience. If this could be accomplished by originating all the shows in New York and Los Angeles, we could terminate the discussions right here. Obviously, such is not the case.

"On the other hand, it must be realistically recognized that there are numerous economic factors entailed in originating network programs, and economic factors are noted for their ability to effect compromises in all industries. The two principal economic factors in television are personnel and facilities. No network can economically support establishments and staffs in a dozen different cities which would be comparable in investment and size to those which are maintained in New York and Hollywood. True, there are a limited number of network programs, such as Pabst Blue Ribbon Boxing, which can "get out of town" with economic feasibility, but for the most part it is more economically practicable to originate programs where the network has its best facilities, most experienced personnel, and of course a concentration of performing talent.

"In passing, let us also recognize that 'centralization' is not peculiar to network telecasting only. The rubber industry is centered in Akron, steel in Pittsburgh, shoes in St. Louis and Boston, and even the distilling industry has a center in Louisville. These 'centers' are 'well stocked' with personnel who are trained and experienced in the respective industries so located. It cannot be argued that any other communities are so voluminously 'stocked' with television personnel as are New York and Los Angeles.

"This, however, should not rule out all other communities as possible sources of good merchandise whether it be tires, girders, boots, bourbon or television programs . . . provided these other communities can produce merchandise of better, or at least comparable quality at costs which are economically feasible.

"In our opinion, there are at least a half a dozen cities besides New York and Los Angeles which can originate first rate television programs consistently and practically. Chicago, of course, heads the list, but there are others including Cincinnati, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Washington and St. Louis. The programs originated in these cities would not necessariiy be of the same stature as the NBC spectaculars or CBS's 'Toast of the Town.' But there are not too many shows of that calibre being originated in New York or Los Angeles either.

Gen. Burbach

"There is no doubt but that the originating of network programs in more communities would be welcomed by the additional communities. Aside from the civic pride and 'personal interest' aspects, the morale of the station personnel would benefit immeasurably. It would be tremendously encouraging to nearby performing talent.

"It would also have more than a little promotion value to the originating stations. And it would give the local citizenry opportunities to be in the 'live' audience of a network show without having to travel a thousand miles or more to enjoy the experience.

"In conclusion, however, let me reiterate the first statement of this comment. The 'WHAT the program IS' should always take precedence over the 'WHERE it ORIGINATES.' It might be surprising, though, how many good 'WHAT'S' could be brought to light by using a greater variety of 'WHERE'S.'

Vanda: 'A Kind Word From TV Diety'

Says Charles Vanda, the veepee in charge of television for WCAU-TV in Philadelphia (whose contribution to video showmanship is no secret to the trade): "I know of several tv centres where good programming (with low budgets and high rating probability) is awaiting some kind word from the tv diety . . . but I doubt that this information will be sought from me by any Weaver except Doodles or any Robinson outside of the Swiss Family."

Vanda, in fact, has some interesting comments on the subject. "Tv programs," he opines, "are not good simply because they originate in New York or Hollywood—and if you watch television you'll certainly concur in this observation! It takes creative brains to develop good programs and this has never been the birthright of either city.

"Personally, I need not walk through sour grapes in my bare feet. I'm not only well shod but also well heeled—Hollywood and New York have been very kind to me, paid me handsomely and treated me affectionately for more than 20 years. But neither city has, or ever will have, a monopoly on creative talent nor are they wise to curtail the contributions available by other creative centres.

"The men who must serve the nation's need in television must not limit their vision to Hollywood or New York. The best they will get is 20-20 and we got higher than that in Philadelphia where 'Big Top' has a 23-29 (pulse and arb) . . . And 20-20, even if you add it, may not get a renewal.

"The boys better get out of New York and Hollywood and concern themselves with building audiences, stations, programs and local enthusiasm all over the country.

One way to do this is to believe that there are bright lads in television who never heard of the little machine of Hollywood or Dick Dickenson of New York. Around this country there are bright lads with electronic and entertainment elementals just as good as you'll find at the coastal temples of tv!

"I keep urging out-of-town tryouts; sending entire programs as far from John Crosby as possible—giving the shows the time away from devastating criticism to get good enough to survive it. We do it with the theatre—why not television? Imagine how enthusiastically Buffalo or Cleveland would receive experimental previews or Caesar or Imogene—giving them time to get their shows in operation before exposing their final format to the nation. Six weeks out of town would have saved Caesar's ill-concealed embarrassment or Imogene's anguish after their premier (?) performance.

Chas. Vanda

"The costs are negligible—less than the amphojel tablets needed, after the reviews of some of the new shows. Bob Saudek out-of-town 'Omnibus' in Philadelphia and it certainly paid off. I've known of two or three networks that poured hundreds of thousands of dollars down the drain experimenting desperately in full view of the nation when they could have spent fractions of their budget quietly preparing their programs in some single sympathetic city where even the appearance of Sonny Tufts gets warm and enthusiastic welcome.'

Swezey's '5 Ways to Get Out of Town'

And listen to the cogent commentary of Robert D. Swezey, the WDSU-TV braintruster down New Orleans way:

"I am inclined to think that the networks and others engaged in television programming are aware that a steady diet of the uniform slickness of Hollywood and Broadway productions is already beginning to pall. They are also acutely aware of the relative inconveniences and risks of moving away from the two established production centres, where seasoned talent and full facilities are readily available, and a finished product can be turned out under the most controlled conditions.

"There are, as I see it, five ways of getting out of town:

(1) Picking up special events of national importance. This has been sparingly done, because of its necessary dislocation of normal network program scheduling.

(2) Traveling network shows, supplementing the basic formats with personalities, features, and local color. Thus far there has been apparently little effort in this line, presumably because of the additional expense and inconvenience involved.

(3) The regular origination of locally produced program series. With the exception of some current CBS originations in Philadelphia, and the two or three shows from Chicago mentioned in the VARIETY article and now discontinued, virtually no attempt has been made to do regular out-of-town originations.

(4) Traveling shows doing one-night stands, which would rely on the locale for all talent and program materials. No attempts have thus far been made in this area.

(5) Feeding as component parts of network shows, live segments from various locations along the network. This is, of course, being done to some extent on programs such as "Today."

"Local station facilities in most of the principal markets of the country are quite capable of originating network programs. During the past several years, we have had no difficulty in originating occasional and varied network programs, including, for example, last year's pickup, under Ford sponsorship, of Mardi Gras, in three program periods totaling one hour and 45 minutes, and requiring the use of three complete mobile units, two of which we provided. As a matter of fact, our remote crew has traveled as far afield as Atlanta to handle network originations. Our studios and those of several local stations in key cities are quite as spacious and well-equipped as those found in nework stations. Local station production personnel is, on the whole, fairly adequate; a large percentage of ours has been network trained, and had years of experience in network production.

Here Comes the Showboat

"Generally, I believe that originations outside of Hollywood and New York must be relied on for occasional and supplemental contribution, rather than regular originations of program series. It is probably only in some of the major markets that regularly scheduled programs can be advantageously produced. I am confident that we could provide at least one series of acceptable network caliber which could be much more effectively produced in New Orleans than in New York or elsewhere. We have, for example, formatted a Showboat program which would have not only top professional quality, but a full flavor which could not be convincingly simulated. We have the river and native setting, the boat, the jazz bands, dancers and incidental talent, and all of the fixings necessary to make this a truly fine production of continuing appeal.

"I think it is obvious that if television is to achieve its full impact, and truly reflect the diversified talents, color, and essential characteristics of the nation, it must take advantage of the inherent fluidity of the network system. I am hopeful, as VARIETY is, that the networks and others engaged in national television programming will have the courage to experiment in all of the areas of outside originations, and that they will have the imagination and inventiveness to exploit the program poten-

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As Long As It's Good It's Worth Repeating

By J. L. VAN VOLKENBURG
(President, CBS Television)

I recall that at the very outset of commercial television some eight years ago we had occasion at CBS Television to refer to the new medium as "a giant in a hurry." We had in mind its sudden, explosive growth virtually from the moment of birth. The extent of this phenomenon becomes apparent when you consider that in 1946 there were no television networks, only 10 stations, and less than 10,000 sets. In two years the station figure jumped to 50, and by 1950 the stations had more than doubled to reach a total of 107, doing a gross volume of $105,900,000.

Mr. Van Volkenburg

Well, this giant has not only *not* relaxed his pace, but seems to be hurrying faster than ever, taking even greater strides than in the past, looming ever more gigantic and powerful over the face of America.

Last year, for example, advertisers spent around $900,000,000 on television for time, talent, production, programs, commissions, etc.—50% more than in 1953. Today television is penetrating into 32,500,000 homes across the country—more than two out of three—and is preoccupying the attention of the average family for nearly five hours a day. By the end of next year total television expenditures by American business are expected to be well over a billion dollars a year, and television's audience will be found in more than 37,000,000 homes.

This is indeed a breathless pace; these indeed are the strides of a giant—but of a giant that never seems to tire or get out of breath. And along with this massive increase in revenue and coverage there are bound to come equally exciting developments in programs and personalities. I think we can look forward to more innovations like "The Search" in the field of public service, and like "The Best of Broadway" in the field of entertainment, in which the concept was first introduced of selecting the best plays of the New York theatre of the past 20 years and adapting them for television. Among the new television personalities who will emerge during the forthcoming year, Phil Silvers is likely to receive considerable attention.

Tint's Big Sprint

Color television will leap forward to become an increasingly integral part of the broadcasting schedule. More and more television stations will equip themselves for color broadcasting and will find increasing audiences for their color programs.

All of this will provide the rich sources for VARIETY's news during the forthcoming year. Details and variations of these themes will comprise the banner headlines and the secondary news stories of the Television Section. There will be no dearth of them, and they will be of continuing interest.

I stress this matter of news content for a specific reason. *My* reason is that, despite the validity and excitement of this kind of news, I suspect that the most fundamental news about television will make few headlines and receive little, if any, attention. I refer to the basic character of television programming and the staying power which this kind of programming has demonstrated throughout the history of the medium.

For example, I think it is significant that the 25 most popular television programs reported by Trendex in November have, on the average, been on the air for three and a half years. The top 10 have been on the air for an average of three years. Of the 25, five have been on more than six years; 12 more than four years; 19 more than two years, and 21 more than one year. This amazing record of continuity-plus-popularity has, like the McGuffey readers of old, a moral of its own. It is an important moral—one that is actually the keystone of CBS Television program policy.

This policy can be stated briefly and simply. It is the policy to broadcast the same television programs on a regular basis on the theory that, given adequate skill and imagination in the production and writing, each program will be continuously varied and exciting. *Only* on such solid foundations is it possible to build a large and loyal following.

To implement this policy it has been our practice to give each new program a reserved spot on the CBS Television program schedule, presenting it at the same time, on the same day, month after month. The staying power of the CBS Television program schedule as indicated in the Trendex report demonstrates, I believe, the validity of this policy.

Our advertisers equally share our belief in the key importance of the value of repetition and consistency. That they put this belief into practice is evidenced by the picture of CBS Television advertising during December 1954, which may be regarded as a typical month. During this period, approximately three-quarters of our network sponsors had programs on the air at least once a week. Actually, a large number of them were on the air even more frequently, with one client sponsoring as many as 35 different broadcasts during a single week. And those who were not on every week maintained a schedule on an alternate week basis.

It's Frequency That Counts

I believe a certain impression has gained circulation to the effect that there has been a trend away from advertising frequency. It would seem to me that the record of advertising continuity on CBS Television goes far toward nullifying this contention. Special "one-time" broadcasts almost without exception have been used to supplement regular campaigns rather than used as a replacement for continuing effort.

An examination of the nine special "one-time" broadcasts carried on CBS Television in 1954 reveals that in every instance they were associated with a special event of some kind. They included, for example, the Election Night broadcasts, the Kentucky Derby, the special Thanksgiving and Christmas Day holiday programs, and those broadcasts which celebrated a major event in business or industrial history such as the 50th Anniversary of the General Foods Company and "The Diamond Jubilee of Light."

These special broadcasts totaled only nine out of more than 10,000 programs aired on a regular basis by CBS Television during the year. Moreover, sponsors of the nine "one-time" broadcasts were at the same time conducting continuous campaigns, either on a network or national spot basis on CBS Television. Actually, there is nothing new about "one-time" broadcasts. There has been a multitude of precedents for it throughout the history of broadcasting.

Essentially, the "one-time" broadcast must be regarded as an integral part of the overall promotion. It is introduced into the campaign by the advertiser for a variety of reasons—either to achieve added impact at the start of a selling season, or as a critical hypodermic to sales, or whatever. CBS Television, as an advertising medium, naturally supports such extra promotional effort, believing that the combined use of continuous and occasional advertising is entirely compatible. On the other hand, we strongly believe that they should not be regarded as mutually exclusive.

When all is said and done, a broadcasting operation depends for its success on its ability to build a program schedule that will provide continuous and lasting entertainment value at the lowest cost per thousand. This fact may not make the headlines, but I believe that it is still the central fact about television broadcasting, and that it is being quietly demonstrated by those advertisers and programs which remain on the network week after week, building enormous audiences and selling an enormous volume of merchandise.

How To Get Into Trouble

By ROGER PRICE

Because of the tensions, frustrations and inhibitions of modern life, all of us frequently feel the need to balance our personality by going out and Looking for Trouble.

Unfortunately, a lot of deserving people who go Looking for Trouble do not find it; *because they do not have the Proper Attitude.* There is plenty of Trouble around—enough for everybody. A few experts have been hogging most of it, but the average man can get his share if he is logical, realistic and determined.

In developing the Proper Attitude, the first thing to remember is that everyone else is also Looking for Trouble. Do not be deceived by initial protestations of good-fellowship. Plenty of people are against you, as you will soon find out if you are alert and take advantage of your opportunities.

To illustrate the Proper Attitude, I will detail here my own activities on a typical evening in August:

10 P.M. Just finished working as a Panel Member on a Television Guess-Game Show, on which the other Panelists got all of the answers correctly and I failed to guess a single one. It was obvious that the Producers had given *them* secret, beforehand information in an effort to make me appear stupid, but I chose to ignore their petty machinations and beyond making a short scene and a few threats I said nothing.

10:28 P.M. Arrived at popular restaurant to have dinner. Ran into an alleged "friend" at the bar and had several (4) Scotch-and-waters, which I drank rapidly.* Almost immediately my so-called "friend's" true nature asserted itself and he became distant and hostile. So did his wife who asked me bluntly to let go of her arm and to stop whispering in her ear because she said I was corroding her earrings. Now that things were on an honest basis there was little I could do but make a few exceptionally witty remarks about my "friend's" personality and taste in wives and leave quickly, thwarting his obvious plan to leave *me* with the bar check.

11:02 P.M. Entered a nearby saloon or "Club" as most of such places are misnamed. It was crowded and I could sense at once that the majority of the customers were against me and were also Looking for Trouble from the way they pushed and jostled when I tried politely to clear a place at the bar so I could get a drink. One small, elderly man seemed particularly aggressive but I had no sooner taken off my glasses and given him a shove than the maitre d' (an obvious paranoid) seized me by the necktie and offered to escort me outside for a breath of fresh air. Not wanting a breath of fresh air, I remonstrated and managed to knock over two barstools and kick the maitre d' severely in the shins before I found myself outside.

11:15 P.M. Invigorated by my success, I walked a few blocks to another less-popular Cafe. There were fewer customers here but their attitude was definitely unfriendly. I could tell they were unfriendly from the way they refused to push and jostle me. They even refused, out of pure snobbishness, to push and jostle *back*. It was natural for a redblooded American to resent this lack of camaraderie and I managed to get my glasses off, upset two highball glasses, shove a little fat man in the chest and trample on his wife's stole before the maitre d' and four waiters could escort me to the sidewalk.

11:40 P.M. I could see it was going to be one of my Good Nights and I hurried to the next bar, an exclusive place on the East Side where I was sure I wasn't known. However, I had no sooner entered the door when a large gentleman scowled at me, took off his glasses and gave me a shove in the chest. Taking off my glasses, I managed to maneuver to a strategic spot behind the maitre d', who was holding his necktie and strike him several badly aimed blows about the back of the neck and ears before he was assisted to the street.

11:48 P.M. A temporary lull in the excitement occurred at this point while the Manager and the maitre d' were apologizing to me for the behavior of the departed guest and were inviting me to have a drink at the Management's expense. But their natural hostility towards me showed itself soon enough. It was right after I had ordered my fourth triple Drambuie on the house and was forced to raise my voice a trifle while explaining to a Thin Gentleman In A Tuxedo that it was merely an accident that my hand happened to keep brushing against his girl-friend. When the Manager turned to placate this Trouble-Maker I took off my glasses and gave them both a push in the chest.

1:14 A.M. Woke up in Emergency Ward of Roosevelt Hospital. Had satisfactory bandage over left eye and a number of contusions about the head. All in all, a very worth while evening.

And *you* can do as well with a little application and the Proper Attitude.†

* *An important point. Dawdling over a drink is the mark of the amateur.*

†Here is a helpful hint to the Reader: I have found it saves time to tie a small tag to my lapel which reads "My name is Roger Price. I am 32 years old. My lawyer's name is Irving Krane. Please throw me out frontwards as my glasses are in my hip pocket. Thank you."

Remember, Looking for Trouble can be a never-ending source of fun and bloodshed throughout the entire year. It is a wonderful release for nervous tensions and is much cheaper than psychonanalysis. But it's up to you. Do not sit home and Wait for Trouble. Go out and Look for it. It's there, believe me!

In Defense of Staying Live

By SYLVESTER L. WEAVER JR.
(President, NBC)

I don't have in mind, right now, an industry-type piece that would match this issue in weight. I'd rather write about something closer to show business—the move of the comics to television film, as reported so regularly by VARIETY.

Pat Weaver

Now that the comics are trading-in the excitement of their live shows for filmed situation comedies, we can look for one sure thing—new comics who will not run away from the workload of the theatre-type live performance television, and who will be able to win the great audiences. I except those comedians whose health will not permit the strain of live television.

This has nothing to do with the film versus live question directly. For recording a live show on film can be good although never as good as a live show in the opinion of many of us. In one case, you have canned your act, and it is static and fixed and forever riveted into its final form. In the other case, you are following in the great tradition of all performances, whether dramatic or musical or even early film; the great tradition where a particular performance, or rendition, or delivery, exceeded all before it and became legend.

It is this ability to surpass all expectations in a live performance that will always bring a high degree of excitement to the panoply of forces arrayed when a curtain goes up, in the theatre or in television. Tonight may be the night in which the star really goes, when the material comes to life in a superior manner, when all the elements combine to make a hit!

The unexpected, the spontaneous are always there—the topical, the todayishness, the current and most talked about—these, too, are there in live television.

Keep It Topical

Although we are missing the boat badly in today's tv comedy writing, television can still have the greatness of radio in its comedy, the greatness of the topical joke, the thing that is funny because it is funny today. Here is a field that vastly increases the merit of the average script. The mediocre, when topical, is funnier than the superior, when it is non-topical. I exclude great material, but we will not have much of that. It is the ability to make adequate material seem like great material that has made the great stars successful. One of the strongest elements in this magic has been the topical line that is funny in these next hours only.

There is also the aura of theatre about great comedy and extravaganzas. It reminds one again of the excitement with which the great radio shows of the thirties and forties came on the air, with music blasting, the exciting bring-him-on introduction, and the applause and laughter. When a situation comedy on film starts, the whole atmosphere is markedly different. It is in low key, and no matter how good and how funny and how well done, it is still a slim vector only of the rich, full entertainment circle.

There are many things wrong with the live comedy shows; and with each of them. But it is a pity that they will not continue to find the solution of their problems within their own form, rather than the comedians moving to a different form. For in the big shows, live, they were the major audience building factor in television, and the most talked-about factor in television. As they go, their roles will be played by something else.

But I believe that the Big Time is still live comedy television.

That is why I think the Spectaculars will grow in importance and in public demand, for they are big time and live. And they offer stars a chance to work occasionally and get the power of television behind their careers . . . but without the need to surrender all their time and effort to television. And they offer the producers and writers time to work out forms, away from week-to-week pressure, that is bound to pay off.

As we look ahead, we can see how the spectacular will use the pre-testing techniques we developed for the comedy development plan; how we can bring music to television with all the importance and glamour and power that music had in radio; how we can move to high-style experiment in drama and comedy, without jeopardizing an entire program operation; how we can go to the vignette and fragment form of concerts of drama and comedy, that we experimented with in Mr. Omm, back in 1950 and earlier.

If we can get the good craftsmen of comedy to work together, always a difficult task, we find available many more forms with freshness in comedy, that can best be handled live. And if we can get the young writers out of school to go through the first years as modest learners of career and craft, instead of high-salaried, well-agented beginners, we can have far more shows making a run for the big time at the local station level, in the radio network, and in some television network operations.

The future of comedy is great, if it continues to offer the full range of its potential. If the major personalities lower their sights from great exciting live television shows full of topical humor to filmed situation comedies, they will not retain their hold on the great audiences.

Producing TV Abroad: 'Tis Optimism Of Ignorance

Between the Commercials

PROF. ROBERT GESSNER
(Chairman, Dept. of Motion Pictures, N. Y. U.)

Now that most people have made up their minds about television, whether it be a blight or a blessing, we are unexpectedly faced with a brand-new conundrum—do you realize that tv is in danger of depleting the nation's water supply?

Prof. Gessner

This may be a good thing for the wine merchants, but very bad for the soap sellers.

Do you recall a few years ago the phenomenon which puzzled the water engineers of our larger cities? They could not understand why at certain specified minutes of every hour there was a sudden runoff of water. Some bright engineer (probably an N. Y. U. grad) discovered that the rush for water coincided with the flashing of television commercials. But what really puzzles the water engineers, according to the latest research of our graduate students, is that there has been a switch—people are rushing for water *between* the commercials!

That commercials have become longer, more frequent, and more expensive has become obvious to the naked eye. That the content between the commercials has become more stereotyped and less imaginative has not been so obvious to the jaundiced eye.

Tv sales power and spiraling costs have resulted in sponsors shifting to spots and networks cutting programs to accommodate more spots. Somewhere between the extremes there must be an answer if tv is to avoid committing the hari-kiri of radio. Even before the advent of tv, radio cut off a sizable portion of its audience by abusing the commercial. Incidentally, radio today makes mighty fine listening by comparison to tv with its picture turned off.

It is no trick to kill the goose that lays the golden egg. This has been not only the history of radio, but of motion pictures—and for that matter of oldfashioned railroading whose philosophy was "the public be damned." Audiences have been forced to become selective, as motion pictures have now discovered to their profit.

There is a social and economic law here which can be studied profitably, or not at all—namely, that as commercials increase in quantity programs decrease in quality.

Doubters can be referred to the water engineers. Also to the 1954 Thanksgiving Parade which was more of a travesty than the Easter Parade of 1953. Tv cannot be considered exclusively a sponsor's medium, no more than newspaper advertisers may be considered public servants. The newspaper owners have assumed that responsibility. There are exceptions of course: occasionally some networks have tried valiantly and have succeeded virtuously in believing the public is primary. But in the main, crime programs have been on the increase, mediocrity has spread like molasses, and we are fast approaching a situation pregnant with sterility.

Signs of the Times

Here are a few of the signs. Rockland County High School students cancelled their production of "Arsenic and Old Lace," because they would rather be entertained than to entertain others or themselves. Teachers throughout the country report an amazing passivity which is foreign to democratic traditions of participation. This passivity among the young is more disheartening than among the middleaged Americans. There are fewer piano teachers, fewer book readers, fewer do-it-yourself courses in adult education.

Culturally, the situation is potentially dangerous. Canned studio laughter is a horror, but there is nothing more horrifying on earth today, including the H-bomb, than to drive down a suburban street at night, in the summer when the windows are open, and hear the unified bursts of automatic laughter. If the stimuli is so universally applied that it evokes such canned "live" laughter we are in for real cultural trouble. To be that mediocre the common level must be kept pretty low. This is what radio did before hari-kiri. 1984, the Doomsday year of the Conditioned Reflex, is less than three decades away.

Tv today is in the same predicament of motion pictures in the early days of sound and color. Techniques are superior to creative content, which is another way of saying that studio crews are five years ahead of front office personnel. This is an agonizing anomaly since tv has barely scratched its creative potential. Industry versus art is an old story, but do we not learn from history?

The tv industry should assure a healthy future by guaranteeing to itself a constant source of fresh talent so that the industry might be able to combat pressures from both a greedy sponsor and an outraged public. An outraged public will come to prefer some system of home selection, such as viewer-sponsored tv.

There should be, among other items, a farm system established among the colleges. Here at New York University we have on the planning board a fresh and integrated approach to the contemporary arts, including drama, motion pictures, television, radio, and the craft of journalism. Tv eats up talent faster than any other medium, and at the same time demands ever-fresh talent and material. Take away talented personnel and what do we have? Only soundproof walls, cameras, lights, and microphones—a corpse. Talent is the blood stream. Should tv become anemic that would be a tragic catastrophe worse than the depletion of the nation's water supply.

Hollywood Unions Worry Needlessly— 'Runaway' Units Are Finding Out Foreign 'Economy' Is Myth

By WALLACE WORSLEY JR.

For the past three years I've been travelling around Europe and Asia making pictures and observing production methods. During this time I have noticed occasional outbursts in the trade papers by Hollywood union leaders and producers against what they called "runaway" foreign television production. Since I was brought up in Hollywood and have been intimately connected with the motion picture industry for over 30 years, it goes without saying that I have seen and heard a good deal of first-class worrying in my time. Most of this worry has proved unnecessary and the same will prove true of foreign television production.

Wallace Worsley Jr.

Theoretically there are two reasons for making television series outside the United States. One of these is apparent lower production costs. The word *apparent* is used advisedly. The producer who makes a series in a foreign country that does not require a foreign locale and could be made in the States is motivated by the desire to make a reputation where he thinks the competition isn't so tough, or because he is under the impression that he can make higher profits through lower production costs. In either case he is misled and is walking into a trap. He is usually abetted in his indiscretion by the cupidity of a distributor who made so much money in the early days of television selling outdated features, that he thinks he can sell anything for tv if he can get it cheaply enough. The result of this unhappy alliance is invariably a bewildered distributor, an inferior product and an impoverished producer.

Differential Swallowed Up

Only a novice producer could assume that a fairly wide differential in the wages of technicians could in the end account for a wide differential in the cost of a film made in English in a foreign country. It is the optimism of ignorance that gives the producer's promotional material enough credibility to make the distributor put up marginal American costs for his series, and a distribution guarantee. This in turn gets him his European capital but usually at high interest rates that were not planned on. Putting all of this together has taken the producer several months, a few intercontinental plane fares and extensive entertainment bills. This money has to come from somewhere and the most obvious place is the American budget for actors, writer and director. Lower salaries are compensated for by percentages of profits. One producer recently discovered after working two years on a deal, that he had given away 110% of the profits. The chances of his ever being discovered in this, however, are purely theoretical.

When he goes into actual production the producer finds that he couldn't have picked a more unsatisfactory place or way to start at the top. It requires considerably more experience in the motion picture field to make a film in Europe in English than it does in Hollywood. Most of the staff and crew don't speak English. This means that they can't follow the story and as a result the gratuitous crew double-checking that one enjoys on a set in Hollywood is absent in foreign production. Every script has to be translated into the foreign language for the staff, and some pretty weird props and sets can be developed in the translation. The budget is so tight that only local actors can be used. Depending on the production center the actors will have Italian, German, French or Spanish accents which give a unique if not necessarily satisfactory flavor to a picture that is not utilizing a foreign locale in its story. Before the production is finished, faulty communication, misunderstandings, mistakes and the producers lack of experience all tend to dissipate whatever apparent savings he originally envisioned. The end result is an inferior and less salable product than one could have made in Hollywood and for little less cost.

The second reason for making pictures in foreign countries and the only legitimate one, is to effectively utilize a foreign background and atmosphere in a series that definitely requires it. The number of producers that have made such series successfully could be counted on "Three Fingered" Jack's maimed hand. High quality production is possible, especially in Europe, and at a reasonable price. Capable technicians and artists are available in every country, but it requires time and experience to find out who these people are.

No Threat To Hollywood

Europe has tremendous potentialities for a few quality productions but these will be no more of a threat to Hollywood than the importation of Westphalian hams disturbs Hormel. The day of the mediocre production, produced in Europe or elsewhere to save money is past. Too much foreign capital has been invested in American tv, pilots and series, that hasn't been returned. Capital is still available but only for solid deals and not for speculation.

It would be well for Hollywood to recognize the fact that Europe poses no threat to it as far as mass production for American tv is concerned. With the steady growth of television in Europe, however, it can become a valuable market for American tv films just as it is for features. It would be unwise under these circumstances for either American producers or labor unions to cause any basis for international ill will over a condition of so called "runaway" foreign production which is more of a mirage than a threat.

(Wallace Worsley Jr. was with M-G-M as unit manager and assistant director for 17 years. He went into production and has made films in China and Europe. His article attests to his grasp of the European scene for tv and feature film production.—Ed.)

THE PLAYER PLUS THE PLAY

By HARRY S. ACKERMAN
(V. P. in Charge of CBS-TV Network Programs)

Hollywood.

Had William Shakespeare foreseen the medium of visual mass communication we know as television, he might well have extended his famous pronouncement that "the play's the thing" to include "the player" as well. In truth, the two seem to go hand in hand when one analyzes the success of the situation comedy in television. Certainly there can be no quarrel that without a good play or story line the success of a series would appear doomed beforehand; but by the same token, it is now quite apparent that the added factor of a strong, appealing personality, as the focal character, is of equal importance.

The notion that even players can develop habit-patterns with their audiences is not a new one by any means. It would appear that such is the very foundation of the "star" system in the entertainment field. Where the theatre is concerned, for example, there are, quite obviously, thousands of people who will flock to see any vehicle in which Mary Martin or Helen Hayes choose to appear. The same is true of the Lunts, Katharine Cornell and many other fine artists. For years, when motion pictures provided the only method of mass visual communication in the entertainment field, moviegoers almost automatically, by habit, patronized films in which certain players were cast.

Harry Ackerman

This habit-factor, with respect to performers, becomes even more important when one endeavors to capture a regular weekly audience for a television series. The pitfall, however, is to assume that the audience attraction possessed by a given performer is the all-important thing, and that the vehicle, provided as the instrument through which audience-attraction can thus be achieved, is secondary as long as it is good. The equation is not quite that simple. In fact, I have almost come to the conclusion that for every good vehicle, there is but one certain player and that it is the combination of the two which spells success.

Magic Formula

Can you picture, for example, "I Love Lucy" with anyone but Lucille Ball in the title role? The entire format of the "I Love Lucy" series emerged from the manner and style which characterized the performances of Lucille Ball as "the wife" during the radio series known as "My Favorite Husband." No writer could have written, by a mathematical formula, what became the end comedy result in the hands of actress Lucille Ball. There existed her personal stamp on every line of her dialog.

This chemistry of the exact personality factor fusing with the proper vehicle has countless examples in television. Joan Caulfield and Barry Nelson "belong" to the new concept of the leading characters developed in the translation of "My Favorite Husband" from radio to the visual medium, and vice versa. Wisely, I think, we at CBS Television determined not to bring "My Favorite Husband" to the medium until such time as we could actually find the two people most perfectly suited to the leading roles. All in all, it took us a year and a half to put together the magic combination of Joan Caulfield and Barry Nelson, and the continued high quality of this program is testimony to the fact that they were well worth waiting for.

George Burns and Gracie Allen offer proof positive that without their own distinctive talents, there could be no situation comedy with the "Burns and Allen" format. Who but Eve Arden could be "Miss Brooks"? Conversely, could "Miss Brooks," as millions know her today, have ever existed if not for Eve Arden? My friend Hubbell Robinson and I can give a most emphatic "no" to that last question, for we combed both coasts in an endeavor to find the right star for "Our Miss Brooks" in radio, and it wasn't until we found Eve Arden that the program idea came alive with some of the personality magic it has had ever since.

With such evidence of the importance of individualities in relation to the vehicle, it becomes more obvious every day that "the play," alone, is NOT entirely "the thing" in the birth of a new situation comedy series for television. The tendency for the most part in the early days of network television was to concentrate on the search for ideas and formats. Having settled for a format, the next step was to cast the principal roles much like motion-picture casting is done and usually with an eye for a quick sale. To a degree, this type of operation still exists; but another new trend, complementary to it, is also beginning to appear.

At CBS Television, for example, we have several players under term contract, who in our opinion have very special talents unique unto themselves. Some of these players have been assigned regular supporting roles in weekly series while the search goes on for the missing half of the final unit which one day will fuse the personality with the proper starring vehicle. Bob Sweeney, for example, is a great comedy talent who performs currently in a supporting role on "My Favorite Husband." Johnny Carson, who has been seen in several shows, will shortly emerge as the star of his own network comedy program. Gil Stratton, another CBS contract player, has been keeping busy in a supporting role on "That's My Boy," while Gale Gordon has been growing in stature constantly as "Osgood Conklin" the school principal on "Our Miss Brooks." A few weeks ago, CBS Television signed Barbara Ruick, a young and extremely versatile performer. She will appear in a variety of roles on various CBS Television shows in preparation for the development of a vehicle which, at some future date, will star Miss Ruick.

The very definition of the aforementioned proven "vehicle" must necessarily include outstanding and proven creative talents on the production side of the scales. Without them, the mixture of the talent and vehicle more often than not results in a brew with a very flat taste. With creative talents like those of Jess Oppenheimer, Al Lewis, Frank Galen and Harry Kronman, however, the brew is not only highly palatable, it's magic.

'Frustrated Author'

By MILT JOSEFSBERG

Hollywood.

During the last few years I'd start to feel slightly uneasy as we approached the Autumnal Equinox. The coming of fall always brought with it a trio of events which I met with mixed emotions. This triple play, which I inevitably eyed with trepidation, consisted of my return to work after my summer vacation, my Yom Kippur fast, and writing my annual article for VARIETY.

Milt Josefsberg

But this past year I realized that one of these chores would not be too much of a strain on me. I would not be at a loss for an idea for VARIETY. In years gone by I sweated and struggled for a simple idea, and rarely came up with a suitable one till late November or early December. This summer, however, my brain was as fertile as a rabid rabbit. Ideas kept popping in and out like writers on the Red Buttons show.

These inspirations came at odd moments. I might be teeing off at my golf club; swimming in my pool; joy riding in my car with the top down; fishing on my boat; or just lazing around, either at my beach house, or my cabin in the mountains.*

Early this September I decided to surprise all by being the Abou Ben Adam of the byliners and getting my article in first. I sat at my typewriter mulling over one of my ideas. It was going to be a breeze, a cinch. I would write a symposium supposedly presenting the attitudes of the various comedy writers to their assorted bosses. I had a good title for it too. I would call it, "No Comedian Is A Hero To His Writer!"

This would be a daring diatribe. I would expose all the injustices of the relationship between comic and writer. How the writer sweats the week away for minor money. Then the comic laughs through half an hour once a week and receives recognition and reward far out of proportion to his contribution to the program. I would contact my friends and quote them on their bosses; the comic who has to have each joke explained to him; the one who not only can't ad lib, but can't even spell it; the one whose timing is so bad his wife gave birth to a child four months after they were married; the one who always accents the wrong word in the punchline. And many, many others.

As I sat at the typewriter with the clean, fresh, white sheet of paper smiling at me, I began to think. I've been writing comedy for 17 years now and during that time have worked for only two men. I started with Bob Hope in 1938 and remained with him until 1943. During those five years I never heard Bob flub a punchline or hurt a gag. Sure, he'd occasionally get his tongue twisted and fluff a line, but his ad lib recoveries more than compensated the loss. After leaving Bob I took a temporary job with Jack Benny which has lasted these past 12 years. In a dozen seasons I must have found a fault of Jack's which I could expose. I did. Every critic raves about Mr. Benny's perfect timing, and yet two years ago his timing was way off during December. He gave us writers our Christmas bonuses a week early. He had some sort of feeble excuse, saying he thought we might want the dough for last minute shopping, but personally I know it was because of his bad timing.

The more I thought of this expose on comedians, the less I thought of it. After a few fruitless hours at the typewriter, I discarded Idea No. 1, and started in on Epic No. 2.

'Sick?' Like Fort Knox

This second article would be about the recent decline of radio and would be called, "I'm Sitting Up With A Sick Friend." Despite its title, this article would be no anthology of anguish. It it I would point out that there are still a few big time radio shows left, and I happen to be fortunate enough to be working on one of them. I had coined such clever phrases as, "Television is like a mistress, new and exciting, but radio is a faithful wife." I would point out that while I too find television writing an exciting change, I look longingly back to some radio highlights which can never be duplicated in video.

It's wonderful watching fights and sporting events on tv, and most comedy and drama. However, there was a certain type of technique in radio which vision destroys. Who can forget the classic example of this on Fibber McGee & Molly's program many years ago. Fibber & Molly had been at a party at their next door neighbors. As they left they said their goodbyes and thanked their neighbors.** for a lovely time. We then heard the sound of the door opening as they left. The door closed. We heard their footsteps on the porch, down the steps, along the sidewalk, up their own steps, on their porch, a key in a lock, their door opened, closed, and then Fibber said, "wasn't it a lousy party, Molly!" Or words to that effect.

For nearly a minute the listener used his own imagination as he heard these sound effects without dialog. And, to quote Fred Allen's book, "Treadmill to Oblivion," each member of the audience enjoyed it at his own intellectual level.

It would be hard to do a bit like this in tv. First, the expense of the set would be prohibitive for just one laugh. Secondly, and probably more important, the facial expressions of the actors during the walk from house to house would betray their feelings unless they cheated.

Evolution of a Bit

Another bit, dependent on sound effects was done on the Benny radio show. Jack was on his way to his neighbors,** the Colman house, to borrow a cup of sugar. He was walking in the street carrying the cup. We heard his footsteps as he walked and he was lightly humming "Love in Bloom." Suddenly we heard a coin being dropped into a cup and Jack, after a slight take, said, "Oh, thank you ma'am."

Sure this bit could be done on tv and might be very funny too. But to do it we would have to show Jack carrying the cup in the customary fashion of beggars. Then you'd have to see a strange woman walk on scene and dig into her purse for some money for this mendicant. The whole illusion would be ruined. We'd have to show the woman's facial expression as she took pity on this poor soul. We'd have to discuss whether Jack should hold the cup out to her as though soliciting a contribution—or would this tip the bit? Other discussion would have to be held on whether Jack would do a double-take as the lady dropped the coin into the cup; whether Jack should start the woman as though to return the money, etc., etc. In radio we just did the bit and let each listener enjoy it in his fashion, and we also saved the price of the invisible actress.

Yes, "I'm Sitting Up With A Sick Friend," might make a good nostalgic article. It would show how radio is declining into a secondary medium, and would soon give up the ghost. But that day I saw an article on the financial pages of my morning newspaper. It was a second quarter report on the semi-annual earnings of the CBS radio division. They were the largest in history with a promise of greater prosperity to come. Artistically radio might be categorized as a sick friend; financially it was a giant. In some small way this prosperity might be due to the famous line coined by CBS vice-president Lester Gottlieb, "You can't get television in a canoe," which not only helped radio immensely but sent canoe stocks to a new high.

So I discarded "I'm Sitting Up With A Sick Friend," along with "No Comedian Is A Hero To His Writer." Then, in rapid succession, I reviewed my other ideas. One was called "Papa's Package," and would tell how everybody in town has a package. This article would tell how the children of the butcher, the baker and candlestick maker discuss their father's fancies.

Another article would be called, "Camouflage With Words, Or, How To Sneak A Plug Past The Censor!" And finally I had a clever idea for a funny feature. I would title it "The Hundred Best Gags Ever On The Air." I did two weeks research on this and had double the amount of required boffs. Pride made me give this up when I discovered that not one gag in the entire lot was originated by me. A guy's got some feelings, you know.

So that's it. I wanted you to know I tried. I tried hard, but since I couldn't get a suitable idea that would hold up for the required length, you'll have to forgive me for not writing an article this year.

(*) *I don't belong to a golf club, don't have a pool, own a convertible, boat, beach house or cabin. I thought I'd brag a bit in case any of my old friends in Brooklyn read this. I don't want them to think I'm still a bum.*

(**) *Neighbors were in radio too; they weren't invented by television.*

Blue TV Shirt Replacing Executive White Collar

By NATHAN L. HALPERN

(President, Theatre Network Television)

Business executives are becoming concerned about their camera profiles as well as sales figures. Tele-Sessions—closed-circuit tv—has linked the two and projected a new concept of rapid business communications.

The white shirt came off the tv actor some time ago, and this past year saw the retirement of the executive white collar in favor of the blue television shirt.

This was never more apparent that in the lineup of General Motors' top brass who gathered in Flint, Mich., to celebrate GM's 50 millionth car with historic ceremonies that were telecast over the most extensive closed-circuit network ever rigged to 66 hotels throughout the United States and to Manhattan's Carnegie Hall.

The sartorial change in business executives is indicative of the deeper significance of the growing widespread use of closed-circuit tv-for-industrial-conventions, national sales meetings and other nationwide business events. Executives have learned that time and money are saved by the use of closed-circuit, while their messages register with impact upon their selected audiences.

Inevitably, experience in large-screen, closed-circuit television is shaping new television techniques. Changes in lighting, camera setup, skillful use of closeup lenses, special tests for transmission circuits and projection system—all are contributing to better program production for large screen.

Personalities are bigger than life on the big screen. The skilled presentation of business executives and management information on big screen has been forceful and dramatic to business audiences seated in hotel ballrooms or theatres across the country.

The past year was launched with a first in the field—when a complete two-hour musical comedy was closecircuited for Seaitest salesmen. Later in the year, an all-star cast was assembled for Frankfort Distillers, featuring a professional tv show specially built for retail dealers in 20 cities coast-to-coast—and they showed up, 20,000 of them. Names like Hollywood's Robert Cummings, Guy Lombardo and his Royal Canadians, tv's John Daly, Jimmy Savo and others began to dot the closed-circuit marquees.

These package productions were of a higher quality than touring shows that must go individually to each city, since prominent talent is not available for the periods of time required for an actual cross-country jaunt. Other Tele-Sessions have combined straight business sessions with some change-of-pace entertainment. Still others have been all business, and effectively so.

With the addition of entertainment to this private type of television have come new production techniques. The telecast of the Opening Night of the Metropolitan Opera added a whole new concept to production in big screen tv —and will result in better television productions for all closed-circuit tv.

As facilities in theatres and hotels have increased to accommodate closed-circuit tv, the production abilities to enhance program values have moved forward rapidly to bring the medium into greater stature. The integration of production to suit the exhibition on large screen has been proceeding rapidly.

One of the biggest steps forward in closed-circuit television came with the announcement by TNT of its purchase of 50 mobile units from General Precision Laboratory specially designed for hotel use. This insured the development of quality large screen tv projection in hotels, where sponsors have desired to meet.

The potentials of closed-circuit tv for business and industry are enormous. The year 1955 should open up closed-circuit tv to a greater degree than ever before.

The Medical Hour

By H. I. PHILLIPS

IT IS A SUNDAY AFTERNOON ON TV, TIME: ANYTIME FROM 2 TO 6. ON THE SCREEN A HALF DOZEN INTERNES AND NURSES COME ON AND SING:

We are attendants bright and gay,
We may not help you, still we may;
We tote the capsules and the pills—
For which you'll get tremendous bills.

One Interne:
I mind the surgeon's cutting tools,
I wise him up on all the rules;
Before he starts to carve away,
"Look sharp! Feel sharp! Be sharp!" I say.

* * *

A Nurse:
I fetch the doctor things galore,
And try to tell him what they're for;
I keep the charts that doctors need—
Though some of 'em can hardly read.

* * *

Second Nurse:
I fetch the custards, fruits and such—
They really don't amount to much;
I rush 'em from the pantry shelf,
But never eat the stuff myself.

All:
We operate in prose or verse—
Come in and let us make you worse!
The doctor takes you all apart—
We chart it all . . . then LOSE THE CHART!

* * *

The Doctor *(entering with the gusto of a master of ceremonies)*—Hello, everybody, and do I feel fine! I really do. I feel like cutting up. Like cutting up. Will somebody please awaken this audience. All kidding aside, we've got a wonderful clinic here tonight, a really tremendous clinic, in fact it's sensational. And some very wonderful and talented patients. Ladies and gentlemen, my first victim—Joe Smith!

Patient *(sitting up as he is wheeled in)*—Thank you! Thank you for this wonderful reception.

Doctor—What's your ailment? No prompting, please!

Patient—I ache all over.

Doctor—Right! That gets you five dollars. When did you first notice this ache? I'm allowing you 10 seconds.

Patient—Just a few hours ago.

Doctor—Correct! You are now at the gateway to the jackpot. Listen carefully. What other symptoms have you.

Patient—I feel all mixed up. Could that be from watching "Omnibus"?

Doctor—Right! You win the jackpot of $5,000, and I'll take half of it as my fee. Will that nurse in the third row pay attention? I don't mind people sleeping, but the other day a woman knitted a shawl while I was diagnosing.

Patient *(groaning)*—Please, doctor, proceed with my treatment.

Doctor—Let me see the X-ray photo. I can't make anything of the picture. It's foggy and full of snow.

Patient—I guess I need a larger outside aerial.

* * *

Doctor *(ignoring the photo)*—Your liver is inverted, one kidney is in bad shape and I don't like the look of your spleen.

Patient—I've been fooling you. I've got a broken leg.

Doctor—Where did you get it?

Patient—I came here from a tv roller skate derby.

Doctor—Have you had any previous experience in hospitals?

Patient—I came through the Mayo Talent Scout Hour. How did you get on the program, doc?

Doctor—I won an audition on "Medic."

Patient—Enough is enough. I don't think you can handle my case the way I want it.

Doctor—How do you want it handled?

Patient—Like one of those tx "spectaculars."

Doctor—Okay. Don't worry. I'm calling in Johns Hopkins Institute, The Search, Adventure and the March of Medicine for consultation!

(Curtain)

Nobody Asked Us, But:

By ARNIE ROSEN & COLEMAN JACOBY

Morticians strike me as the gloomiest of all tradespeople.

Guys who have both ulcers and insomnia are odds-on to be grouches.

Chances are the red-faced boozer who knocks the bouncer out with one punch thinks he's tough.

The horses at the Trotters would run a lot faster if they didn't have to pull those wagons.

Somehow sandhogs never seem to get a suntan.

I'm always impressed when I see a man wearing both spats and Bermuda shorts.

For some reason I'm suspicious of unshaven men who carry switch-knives.

Those publicity hounds who jump off bridges seldom do it twice.

I may be wrong but all women seem shorter when they take off their shoes.

There will probably never be another Yankee centerfielder named Joe DiMaggio.

I feel slighted when a bus-driver tells me to move to the rear of the bus when it's empty.

I sincerely believe Ernest Hemingway to be a greater writer than Mickey Spillane.

Girls who give their phone numbers to strangers in a bar don't figure to be good cooks.

Fat, overaged, peroxide blondes with circles under their eyes leave me cold.

In spite of the snide remarks, for a big man Farouk doesn't look bad in a Bikini.

The men in Greenwich Village who wear makeup and earrings always strike me as neurotic.

Dope addicts who need a shot spoil the gaiety of any party.

Schmeling would have taken Joe Louis in their second fight if the Brown Bomber hadn't gotten in 50 or 60 lucky punches.

Guys who stagger into doorways to take a slug of Vitalis are even money to become alcoholics.

WHAT'S MY STATUS?

By MARK GOODSON

Status is important in all societies. Often it means more than dollars, and in the end, it may determine the flow of dollars. This is true in showbusiness society as well. The various forms of entertainment are *ranked*, consciously or otherwise, into what the sociologists might call a "pyramid of prestige."

Mark Goodson

Occasionally, *time* changes our judgments. Jazz, for example, has taken on in recent years a new and uplifted position in the showbusiness caste system. Circus performers, clowns in particular, are now ranked high, and there is even sort of a reminiscent upgrading of burlesque.

Status also varies with the group doing the grading. Thus, the upper-brow, real or fancied, often makes different judgments from the middle-brow group. The former, for instance, tends to find most tv a bore, and is often proud not to have a set at all—and, oddly enough, though he hated radio when it was popular, he has recently developed a strange affection for the sound box now that most people have turned to video.

When this lofty-browed critic does turn to tv, it is interesting to note how frequently he finds himself delighted with *game* programs, or what we refer to as audience participation. While he may shun his tv set in favor of The Saturday Review when a drama or variety show is on the tube, he is liable to be held as a viewer by the interplay of personalities on a good panel program.

Unfortunately, however, the elevated status assigned audience-participation programs by our esteemed friends, the egg-heads, is less important to Bill Todman and myself than the standing given us by the leaders of the Madison Avenue-Network set. Here, we regret to announce, the audience-participation show—good or bad—is excluded from the social register.

Not that we don't do well and make money and all that sort of commercial nonsense—but we're the rich fellas with the loud vests in from the country who can just manage to sneak by the greeter at "21." But we're quickly assigned to the corner table in the back room where we won't bother the nice people.

And, to stick the metaphor out, we are generally restricted to the back and side tables of the tv schedule. We've been told politely but firmly that audience participation "belongs" in marginal time periods—before 8 and after 10:30—and on Saturday mornings. The cream slots are reserved for . . . well . . . you know . . . "the other kinds of shows."

As an amateur psychoanalyst, I am anxious to examine this prejudice on the part of programmers. Or is it a prejudice? Maybe audience participation deserves low status because game shows tend not to do well. But what do the facts show? In a recent winter Nielsen, five out of the top 15 shows were audience participation—What's My Line, I've Got a Secret, Two for the Money, You Bet Your Life, and This Is Your Life (the first three, by he way, are ours).

Cost Factor

Besides, there is something else in favor of audience shows. Their costs, in relationship to the number of viewers, are lower than most other types of programs. They are often excellent bargains for the sponsor. Aha! Maybe *there* we've hit something. Bargains are good business—but who wants bargains in the social register. In other words, it is quite possible that our lower price tag is often held against us. While clients and agencies are interested in getting more viewers for less money, networks are concerned with getting more viewers . . . period. And programmers probably feel that a more expensive show ipso facto is better. At any rate, its status seems to be higher regardless of the rating it produces.

But the negative feeling about audience shows is not based completely on the fact that they are less expensive and, therefore, better bargains. It is based, I feel, on a desire of tv programmers to associate with the more established forms of theatre, operas, ballet, movies, and so on. These are looked upon as *primary* arts, while audience participation is ranked as a *secondary* art—if, indeed, it is given the status of an art at all.

Analysis indicates the irony inherent in this judgment. When television puts on dramatic performances, to use one example, it is really relegated to a "secondary" position in comparison to the parent media of theatre and movies. Certainly, with all of tv's ingenuity and ocasionally high budgets, it cannot turn out a weekly "*Oklahoma*" or a monthly "*High Noon*." TV can be good—it often is—but it seldom is as good as and never better than the finest products of the Broadway or Hollywood stages.

But whether you like it or hate it, audience participation is a truly *primary* art, original with the broadcasting medium, and available nowhere else in better form. Where in movies, stage, opera or what-have-you do you go to find the particular cluster of entertainment ingredients put together in What's My Line? It is a truly original form—a broadcasting art with its own skills, its own disciplines, its own audience impact.

Finally, the status of the audience show, both panel and quiz, is lower than it should be because of a widespread underestimation of the skills and imagination necessary to put it together and operate it successfully. Frankly, it looks easy. Four people behind an old table talking to a contestant who sits next to a moderator at another old table—this is art? This takes brains? This pays profit? What a racket!

Actually, having been through the mill of just about every type of radio and television show business—drama, musicals, variety, and audience-participation—I can speak with some authority about their comparative difficulty. The *good* panel or audience show is the toughest kind of show to put together—and hold together. The worst thing about it is that the producer of participation shows is ALWAYS pioneering, always creating the forms and the substances at the same time. He often works out of thin air, in areas where no one has yet made the mistakes, 'til he makes them. No wonder we are sometimes accused of borrowing from ourselves—we haven't got anywhere else to go to borrow.

Of course, I'm prejudiced too, but I think that game shows are a higher art form than our present status indicates.

Anyway, we're going to keep on wearing our shiny tuxedos. One of these days we may get a front table.

BLOCK TV PRESENTS

By HAL BLOCK

Chicago.

Now that Block TV has sold its first two live shows, "Meteorite, Son of a Star Is Born" (a Space Program) and "How to Stop Worrying and Start Fretting" (a documentary), we have in recent weeks taken the plunge and gone rather extensively into FILM PRODUCTION for tv.

Although we came up against the usual difficulties connected with growing pains, our board of directors is proud to announce that after three weeks of intermittent lensing we now have completed 8,295 half-hour films. For this accomplishment, however, we must give due credit to our recent association with Dissi-Lute Productions, a veteran tv film organization of over 10 months experience.

We herewith list with pride our OUTSTANDING films. ALLLL DIFFERENT!!!

THIRTY-NINE PILOTS OF PILOTS

These include pilots of army pilots, navy pilots, marine pilots, a pilot of Paulette, a series of pilots of pullets, reserve pilots, and retired pilots. (Some pilots still shooting!).

INSPECTaculars

Specially made for parents with marriageable daughters. Parents; why send your daughter to Florida, Europe or The Mountains, to meet some eligible bachelor or a rich husband? Block TV will make a Pilot film of your daughter, showing her front view, side view, sewing, cooking, etc. Also long shots of the father going to the bank, a shot of mother getting into the stationwagon (station wagons and banks may be rented). Once we make the Pilot film, parents, *your* work is over!

We will send the FILM to Florida, Europe, and the Mountains.

Also to Republican Clubs throughout the nation, and in EXTREME cases the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

DOCUMENTARIES

Block TV is ESPECIALLY proud of its Documentaries. For instance:

"I Was a Dentist for the R.F.D."

"The Kink and I" (the story of Senator McCarthy's Elbow).

"The Crane Mutiny" (a study in plumbing).

"I Put a Banana in the Refrigerator . . . and LIVED!"

"How to Fix It Yourself" (a study in ward politics).

"Do You Make Good Money?" (a warning by the Bureau of Printing & Engraving).

"I Conquered Stuttering" (by Harpo Marx).

"Caddying Can Be Fun!" (by Mamie Eisenhower).

MUSICALE COMMERCIALS!

Block TV comes up with a BRAND new idea AGAIN!! Our Musicale Commercials are so tuneful, SOOO Entertaining, and Soooooo Long that many of these commercials are now being sponsored by OTHER products. These are our BEST 30-minute commercials:

"They Called Her Frivolous Sal hepatica" (30 minutes of effervescence).

"A Cigar Is Born" (an exceptionally good Filler).

"How to Make Instant Halevah."

"Jack and the Beans Talk" (speaks for itself).

"The Three Little Liver Pills and How They Grew."

"Here Today and Hot Tamale" (for mambo tamales).

"Tom Swift at Robert Hall."

"May Belline, Private Eye Wash" in "The Case of the Obscure Pupil."

EXCLUSIVE FAMOUS FILM SEQUELS!!

"Son of Cinerama."

"From Here to Eternity Mects Frankenstein."

"On the Waterfront *Strikes* Again!"

"A Streetcar Named a Night at the opera" (With Groucho, Harpo, Chico, Brando).

"Libetchy on Skid Row" (This film was performed by Liberitchy on Skid Row and was financed by that Kin of the Bowery—Hobo Rockefeller. In the film Liberitchy is playing in the Empire Room of the Mills Hotel, an atmosphere that is only dimly lit by a candelabra of Sterno Cans. He is playing the Fire Dance and as the music gets hotter and hotter the cans melt and the audience quickly drinks down the Sterno. This gets them so excited that at the height of the Quadrille they get up and seize brother Jorge by the Stradivarius!) (a thriller!).

INDIVIDUAL LISTENING SURVEYS

Senators: Are you important enough to have your phone tapped?

Know how many listeners you actually have. At the next Senate Investigation testify with CONFIDENCE in your RATING! (Our listener survey will put bluster in your next fillibuster, Buster!)

RUSSIAN ART FILMS (EXCLUSIVE)

"Me the People" (Starring Malenkov).

"This *Was* Your Life," starring Slaves of Stage, Screen and Siberia.

"Snitch Without a Hitch" (a Children's Program).

"Down You Go" (Guest Shots of and at Politburo Members).

"Thirty Ways to Cause Heart Disease" (MVD Studios).

YE OLDE ENGLISH FILMS

Especially suitable for your "It's Later Than You Think" program.

Everyone guaranteed to be a gem of antiquity. For instance:

We have one flicker that can definitely be proven to have been made 90 days before the invention of the camera.

Of even more valuable and ancient origin, we also possess the ONE copy of an English Film so old that in it England lends money to the United States.

GIVEAWAYS

"Fort Knox." This series is guaranteed to give away more money than the Marshall Plan. In fact, just to show how colossal it really is, take our first film, "One of Our Sponsors Is Missing." (It seems at the end of the first show the M.C. became so enthusiastic that by mistake he gave away the Sponsor's factory.)

"U.N. Asked for It" (formerly "Take It or Grab It"). Nations why go to war? With our new giveaway program we eliminate the necessity. For instance, M.C. to Diplomatic Contestant, "Splendid, that answer is ABSOLUTELY correct. You now have Jugoslavia." Would you like to try for New Zealand? (background shouts of "You won't be SORRY, etc.)

And now for Block TV super-service for ad agencies:

If by any chance you might wish to make some changes in our present films or perhaps you have some program ideas of your own Block TV is proud to announce its new revolutionary technique by which we can turn out these films and have them delivered to you SO FAST that you will have time to reverse your decisions three or four times. Block TV films are now being shot EXCLUSIVELY ON POLAROID Cameras.

Eyebrow-Lifting Truth About G. Gobel

By HAL KANTER

(Who has eyebrows)

Hollywood.

Since it became public knowledge that I am associated with George Gobel, I have been interviewed by more reporters than during that hectic period when my father was running for the presidency against Rutherford B. Hayes. (Dad lost. Toynbee tells us.)

Hal Kanter

After the second vodka gimlet during every interview the inevitable pops up: "now for some anecdotes about George that will give my readers an insight into what he's *really* like."

I have never told any of them the truth. I have been saving the revelatory anecdotes for a home journal such as this, where fact is kind and fancy knows no shelter.

The first time I met George Gobel, he was standing on the window ledge of his Palmer House suite in Chicago, picking off pedestrians with a highpowered rifle. Immediately I sensed he was funloving. And because I, too, have a fun-loving streak, I knew we'd get along famously. What really sold me on the chap right off was the way he'd nip a passing convention delegate between his badge and his ribbon and as the delegates lay writhing, old George swung his sights onto another target—*deadpan!*

"He's another Buster Keaton," I said to myself. "And his aim's better."

Later we fell to talking, as fun-loving folk will fall to do. He hardly moved his mouth when he spoke. I noticed, too, that his mouth hardly moved even when *he* moved.

"This man's another Charlie Butterworth," I said to myself. Little did I realize that George was listening. That's another facet of the man's personality: he doesn't move his ears when he listens. And how many interviewers have overlooked *that!*

George walked across the room. I doubled up in laughter. "He's another Charlie Chaplin!" I exclaimed to the firemen who had come in to douse the blazing drapes which George had experimentally saturated with kerosene then played his Army surplus flamethrower against.

Later that day we went to a ballgame. See, earlier George had said to me, "There's a ballgame today. I read about it in the papers." The papers! I made a mental note on a perfectly blank piece of mind: this kid's another Will Rogers.

As George went to wash up for the game he began singing to himself and I nodded with approval, discovering him to be a young Crosby.

"It'll be a lousy game," he called out, "but let's watch it anyway."

Just Versatile Period

"A John Crosby," I assured myself, quite pleased with my ability to size up a chap even over running water.

We left the hotel and, at his insistence, walked all the way to Wrigley Field. The man's another Bernarr Macfadden.

We passed a number of bars, an exhibition of his iron will.

By the way people smiled at him and patted him on the head as he passed, from the numbers of small dogs who rushed out of private homes to lick his hand, the delighted cries of children and mounted policemen who sang his name in sweet voices and the Shriners on camel back who rode after him bearing tokens of their esteem, I judged him to be a warm, lovable, compassionate, human being first, an actor second and a guitar player last. I smiled happily to myself: George Gobel is another Charles Ray."

When we entered the ballpark, I knew immediately this was Gobel's room. The entire crowd—baseball players as well as members of the Chicago Cubs—stood at attention and sang "The Star-Spangled Banner."

During the seventh inning stretch, George rushed up to the press box and playfully threw Jack Brickhouse into the grandstand seats some 40 feet below. "He's another Wladek Zybyszko," I marvcled. And I don't marvel easily.

In time, I was to discover other facts about George: he's thrifty, for instance. I have never seen him smoke the same cigaret twice. He's brave; he will bring a friend home to dinner without giving his wife notice. And he's dedicated; he feels a man in the public eye should do more than entertain. He should try to use his position to instruct. He's another John Dewey, if you really want to know.

This last statement is perhaps best illustrated by an incident that occurred after George had been on television only three weeks. We were walking along a quiet boulevard in California when a sweet old lady hobbled out of a welder's shop and stopped George.

"Young man," she said, "I just want to tell you how much I enjoy watching your program. You are the most refreshing thing I've seen in weeks."

George smiled that sweet, little-boy smile of his and said, "Thank you, Granny. Do you know anything about jiu jitsu?"

"No," the old lady complained bitterly.

George grabbed her bony wrist, flippered her over his shoulder in a beautiful figure-8 and, walking away from her flattened form, instructed: Learn!"

There you have it. The real Gobel—a colorful, funloving citizen of the world. Don't believe those stories that paint him as a quiet, sober, intellectually inquisitive, hard-working, loving father of three, husband of one. He's more. Much more. George Gobel is—well—he's another George Gobel. So there you are.

'Through Every Medium With Burnt Cork And FIVE Daughters'

By CHARLES ISAACS

Hollywood.

When big league television hit show business in 1950 a lot of top comedians refused to accept the new medium. They turned away and insisted you just couldn't send visual programs through the air. As far as they were concerned it was witchcraft.

The National Broadcasting Co. had some ambitious plans for a series of top star telecasts, but first they had to acquire the top stars. If they could entice one virginal comedian into the fold the others would follow. Eddie Cantor was the favorite choice for target No. 1. Here was a man who for over 40 years had starred in every show business outlet. They went to work on him. Once the financial end of the deal was set there was no trouble getting Eddie to perform. I am sure that if some day television should blow over, Cantor would be the first comic to go door to door and put on shows in people's living rooms.

Shortly after it was announced that Cantor would begin a series of one-a-month television shows, I was called in with another writer, Artie Stander, to discuss the first script. We had driven out to Eddie's big Beverly Hills home and had been escorted through the house and out into the backyard. Next to the shimmering green water of a beautiful swimming pool we found Cantor getting a rubdown. We introduced ourselves, shook hands with Eddie and then picked up towels to wipe the mineral oil off our hands.

"Boys," Eddie said from the top of the rubbing table, "I know this show can be great. I know when I do 'Robert E. Lee' in blackface I'll score big. The problem is, what are we going to do that's different?"

Artie and I didn't answer that moment. Instead we sat back to get the full benefit of the sun and idly watch the masseur tear hunks of good living off Cantor's moderately lean stomach.

"Eddie," I began, "even a revue type of show is better if it has a thread—not a complicated story line, but just a thread to hold the interest and——"

"I've got it," Eddie interrupted, "now say we're in Cantor's house——"

Eddie, like many of the entertainers in his experience bracket, will refer to himself in the third person. Jolson often said, "I can't do that line, no suh, Jolie don't talk that way." Jimmy Durante, struggling to remember his own lines during dress rehearsal would say, "He says, 'Everywhere you go, critics'!"

Eddie continued his thought. "Try and imagine a big, voluptuous showgirl who comes into Cantor's livingroom."

"Yes," I said, but of course I wasn't entirely with him. The girl was in *my* livingroom.

"She's the representative of the sponsor," Eddie went on, "and she tells me about the things I cannot do on the show. For instance, she says, 'there'll be no pie-throwing like this,' and she hits me in the face with a pie."

Apple or Custard?

I looked at Artie. We had never been "pie writers," and he appeared to be as unhappy as I was. I finally said to Eddie, "It would certainly get a laugh."

That was the encouragement he wanted. "Maybe she hits me with several pies," he said, warming to the idea, "and then ends up with a seltzer bottle squirted in my face."

By this time he had leaped excitedly from the table and was pacing up and down the patio in the nude. The masseur followed, one step behind, with a towel.

"Sure, I know Berle has pie-throwing all the time," Eddie said, arguing with himself, "but this is a great way to switch it."

We didn't say a word. I tried to think of different flavors of pies. Maybe if we came up with a new taste sensation, the sequence might be acceptable. I saw a whole new generation of comedy writers who would not have to think of funny situations, but also know how to bake good, humorous, loose pies. With the arrival of color television, writers will strive to top each other with new shades in pies, perhaps resorting to raspberry with a grey streak down the center, or a gooseberry topped with plaid.

Our silence subdued Cantor and he crawled back into the rubbing table and lay there quietly.

"The idea of a big sexy dame is good," he finally said defensively.

Nobody talked for a moment. I thought to myself, the idea of a big sexy dame is good even when you're not planning a $50,000 television show.

Cantor finished his rubdown, slipped into a pair of shorts and said he was due at NBC. "One thing we know we'll need are sketches."

"Maybe some satirical bits," I suggested.

"We could burlesque a news item," Artie said.

"Let's keep away from politics," Cantor said hurriedly, "I'll be on for Colgate Toothpaste and they won't want us to kid either party. Both Republicans and Democrats brush their teeth."

"Maybe we'd be safe if we just do jokes about babies and old people. They don't have teeth."

Cantor looked at me a moment, gave his shorts a hitch and started for the house. "Work hard, fellows. Concentrate."

For two days we concentrated on sketches, putting in long hours—in the hope we could bring in the freshest, smartest material that Cantor had ever seen. The following day we were invited to lunch at Cantor's home. As before we were told to go out into the backyard. Eddie had finished having his rubdown and was now lying stretched out naked in the sun. When he heard us coming along the patio he jumped up and greeted us.

"We'll go inside and have a bite of lunch. We're very informal here."

No Nudes Is Good Nudes

Artie and I looked at each other and shrugged. Neither of us had ever eaten lunch with our clothes off, but we couldn't insult our host and employer. Cantor pioneered a lot of things in show business—maybe he was now setting a new social pattern. Our fears were groundless, however, for Cantor slipped into slacks and sport-shirt.

As we walked into the house I handed Eddie the two sketches. He shuffled through the pages and asked facetiously, "Is this stuff dynamite?"

"Just don't smoke while you're reading it," I laughed. Artie laughed along with me, but we were suddenly alone. Eddie had disappeared into a bathroom. We sat down in the living room and nervously awaited the decision. It was impressive to find a comedian who sought such extreme solitude while weighing the values of a script. There in the porcelain sterility of that little room a $50,000 television show was being born.

Eddie came into the living room. "Boys, these could be very funny . . . yes, very funny."

"They're smart," I said, "but very solid."

"Let's eat," Eddie said, and started for the diningroom. As we sat down Cantor said, "Boys, don't be too clever, from me they expect hilarity."

The table was loaded with platters of cold meats and smoked fish. I'm sure some of the foods were flown in from New York. Almost every entertainer who has had the success that affords him the luxury of unusual delicacies, becomes an epicure and no meal is complete without at least one item arriving breathlessly via air express.

Artie and I didn't bother to check air travel labels on the food, but dug in hungrily. Eating seemed to be a better idea than talking, because it was obvious that Cantor wasn't sold on the sketches. We had worked hard to keep the material fresh and topical and I honestly felt Eddie could do a great job with them. Artie must have been thinking the same thing, for he looked up from his corned beef and said, "Eddie, that 'International sketch' is really great. Alan Young would give his right arm for it."

"What do you think I'm giving?" Cantor smiled grimly.

I laughed and kept on eating. The ship may be sinking but I was at least going to come out of this debacle well-fed. A maid entered with a large platter of scrambled eggs. Eddie did a 'take' when he saw the new addition to the spread. "What's with all the food?" he asked the maid. "You're feeding them like the sketches are done already!"

A couple of days later Artie and I had another sketch ready, but as we prepared to leave for Cantor's home I got an idea. Eddie would no doubt be lying nude in his backyard and we might endear ourselves with him by trying his way of life. If we came to a script conference as naked as he was, perhaps we'd have the simpatico that seemed to be lacking.

That Beyhills Influence

Artie went along with the idea. He reasoned that we were getting to an age where we wouldn't be able to do mad things and blame them on our exuberant youth. Crazy gestures are acceptable through the teens and into the twenties, but in the thirties such behavior is suddenly considered the beginning of senile decay. Therefore, with so little time remaining, we planned this one fling. We stripped off our clothes and donned raincoats. When we arrived at Cantor's we crept along the driveway to the hedge that screen the swimming pool. We dropped the raincoats, and with the scripts in our hands, walked naked into the backyard like two stockholders in a nudist camp.

The yard was empty and as we stared lamely at each other we heard the maid calling from the house, "Who's there?"

We raced back to the hedge, pulled on our raincoats and hurried down the driveway. The maid looked out the kitchen window and said, "Oh, Mr. Cantor left a message for you gentlemen. He'll be in the conference room at NBC."

Artie said, "I don't know about you, and I don't know about Cantor, but if we're going to NBC I'm wearing clothes."

In the ensuing days we brought in additional material for the slowly forming television show and Cantor was becoming more enthused by the hour. At one of our last meetings with him before he left for New York, we demonstrated a wrestling satire. Eddie, as usual, was lying on the rubbing table squeezing the last bit of vitamins from the California sun. He read the sketch to himself and didn't say anything for a couple of minutes. Finally he yawned. This gave us hope. A yawn forces the mouth to open and once the mouth is open it's possible a laugh may issue. But Cantor didn't laugh—he frowned.

"This could be very funny, boys," he began.

"But?" I asked.

"No! No buts!" Cantor exclaimed, "this is very good. Now if a big wrestler threw me into a position like this ——," Eddie, naked, threw himself on the grass near the patio. "This would get big laughs."

"Especially in that costume," Artie said.

"Well, let's figure that it's in, huh, Eddie?" I prompted.

"No," Eddie said, "maybe we better forget it."

"But why?" I asked, "it's funny."

"Because," Cantor said wistfully, as he lay back again on the rubbing table, "I'm not a kid. Ten years ago I could take pratfalls."

He sighed and we went home to write another sketch, one with nothing in it that might bruise or wind a comedian. Despite his resistance to doing our violent comedy, Eddie went back to New York and in a tremendous display of youthful energy and stamina, became a television star.

A Memory of the Bard

When I was very young and a much larger, wider and more buxom girl than I am today, after the San Francisco earthquake I ran away from home to join the Ben Greet Shakespearean Company with a wild desire to be a great actress. This company was distinguished but impoverished, so I had to double sometimes in the characters I played.

In "Romeo and Juliet" I was the nurse throughout the play but in the last scene played Count Paris, who as you remember, fought a duel with Romeo and was killed at the tomb of Juliet. There was no money for new tights. The character who played Paris was much slimmer than I, but I squeezed into them with great effort, playing the part for the first time at, as I remember, Northwestern University in Chicago. The critics were there and at the crucial moment I heard the fateful rip and my tights and I parted company, so I had to fight the duel and die facing the audience. One critic cruelly remarked that "Elsa Maxwell played the most extraordinary death scene" that he had ever witnessed on the stage.

Elsa Maxwell.

Glad We Could Roam Together

By JOHN CAMERON SWAYZE

This has been a traveling year for the Swayzes. Tuffie—my wife—and I haven't been gadding all the time since some of the trips were assignments. But we've had a lot of fun traveling overseas, and, here at home, from plush La Coquille at Palm Beach to our favorite West Coast hostelry, the Beverly Hills Hotel, with many stops in between. At the Beverly Hills, incidentally, we moved into a bungalow just vacated by David O. Selznick, and found a telephone affixed to the bathroom wall in juxtaposition to that room's most essential appurtenance. "This," I said briskly, "is the absolute ultimate in 'Hollywood'."

John C. Swayze

We've met a lot of people we thought were wonderful in our ramblings and picked up a lot of chronicles en route. One is the story of Frank Parker's touche. The only flaw in the account from my standpoint is that the one who gets his head lopped off is Swayze. On a trip from Paris to Algiers we traveled by jet. It was an exceptionally beautiful high-point.

Frank Parker, another member of the party, slept soundly from take off to landing, seeing nothing.

Back home, it happened the three of us limousined in from Idlewild Airport together and, talking of the happy journey just ended, we mildly reproached Parker for missing the gorgeous jet views, giving him most complete details.

The following Tuesday night I used the episode on my program, telling of the Alps on our left, the Pyrenees on our right, visible simultaneously because of our 8-mile altitude; how the blue Mediterranean and the coast of Spain stood out below in the sunshine, and how it had been so smooth I'd placed a 100-franc coin on edge of the table and it hadn't even quivered. Next day the editor on the NBC news desk said, "That story about your trip you used last night, was it a press agent handout?" "Of course not," I told him. "It was strictly eye witness stuff." "Well, the only reason I asked," he announced, "is because my wife was listening to the Arthur Godfrey show yesterday morning and Godfrey asked Parker how the trip had been and Frank replied with the same story, almost word for word—the Pyrenees, the Alps and the 100 franc coin on edge!"

Scooped By a Terror

I had been scooped by 12 hours. Had it been another reporter I wouldn't have minded so much. But this was by a tenor and he hadn't even been awake when it happened!

There are two clocks in Paris that have caught our fancy. One is the huge timepiece high on the wall above the waiting room at Le Bourget airfield. It is ringed with the names of cities of the world and New York needn't think it is such-a-much. The only U. S. town inscribed there is Washington. One of the names completely stopped me—Tananarive. I found out later. It's the capital of Madagascar, which I suppose you knew all along.

The other clock is the one in the tiny bar of Ludwig Bemelmans' hotel at 4 Rue de la Colombe, which is behind Notre Dame and a street that few Paris taxidrivers can find without help from a gendarme. The building which Bemelmans is gradually turning into a hostelry of 12 rooms dates to 1225, by the way, and, I should say, looks practically every year of its age. Some say he will make a fortune there. I don't know, it all depends on whether the spot becomes such a fad he can boost the tariffs sky-high and still draw. As for the clock, there's nothing unusual about it except that it will run only upside down. I was cynical and doubted it so the barman climbed on a chair, unhooked the large affair and turned it right side up. The clock stopped. So there it hangs in reverse and you can figure out the time any way you like, including standing on your head if the whim strikes you. At Bemelmans' chances are no one would bat an eye.

There is a light inside the entrance to the famed Lido night club in Paris, which, my traveling bride of many years standing and I think the best show in town. You may notice it if you walk in, and, if you do, you may be sure that Tuffie is responsible. The first time we were there she walked in and fell down the flight of stairs into the club. If they didn't build them tough in Arkansas she never would have been able to dance the rest of the evening. Our host that night promptly braced the management and pointed out that to eliminate the hazard some illumination was needed. It's there now and if you ask me the unintentional acrobatics of the girl from Arkansas were responsible.

The Man Who Brought the Whistle to Paris

It was at the Lido that the United Press bigwig, Earl J. Johnson, and I found we both hailed from Kansas, an odd discovery to make while sitting in an extravagant Paris night spot in boiled shirts and dinner jackets. As our party got into the spirit of the evening, Mr. Johnson for some reason that now escapes me, confided he had been something of a whistling fool in his salad days in Winfield. Thus it was that when, after one particularly adroit act on the stage, he asked, "Is it time to whistle?" I responded with an emphatic "Yes." There then echoed from wall to wall of this Parisian night club one of those full-blown earsplitters which, at home, are reserved for moments of supreme approval. I doubt there had ever been anything to equal it here. But at times the French are remarkably fast on the uptake. From all over the place came a din of shrill blasts. There couldn't have been enough Americans on hand to accomplish it, this was native talent. I can't be entirely sure, but I suspect that this essentially American mark of approval has reached the French capital to stay.

With all this prattle about globetrotting you may think I imagine myself a voyageur of considerable proportions. Not anymore. I hadn't been 30 minutes on the Paris pavements before I'd been braced by two characters wanting to steal my role by exchanging francs for American money and by a postcard salesman, one of those who preys on tourists. They completely blasted my illusions of being taken for a boulevardier. Despite my midnight blue chapeau and the flower in the lapel of my snappy dark jacket, I fooled no one. I should have stuck to my own credo that you simply can't put a monocle in a yokel's eye!

A TRIPP TO BOUNTIFUL

By PAUL TRIPP

Just about half a year ago, a door marked "Public Service" swung open and I walked in.

For a guy who had made a career in the field of fantasy, it was a strange and uneasy moment. And my trepidation was not lessened at all by my preconceived ideas about public-service programs carried over from the old days of radio.

Paul Tripp

I became very careful about dropping the "g's" from my word endings. I read a page of the Encyclopedia Brittanica every night before going to bed. I practiced holding my nose at a very elevated angle. I thought it was "Goodbye, butter and eggs—Hello, eggheads."

I couldn't have been farther from the truth. My pronunciation has returned to normal, and my proboscis is again buried in the latest issue of VARIETY. I see no more eggheads than any normal American sees at business luncheons, and as for money—who couldn't use more?

What I have found out is this: There is as much, if not more, entertainment per square inch of screen coming from educational and informational shows as from the usual run of commercial efforts. And advertisers please note: More entertainment per dollar spent.

The people working in the "reality" field, the public service field, are daily proving a point the "fiction" boys sometimes miss—namely, that money is no substitute for talent.

The Price Is Right

Working with limited budgets but unlimited imagination and vision, the public-service producers have put shows on the air that have not only surpassed many commercial efforts qualitatively but have piled up heaps of prestige for station and network while building respectable rating scores. I am thinking of such shows as "Adventure," "The Search," "Camera Three," "What in the World?" and their like. And at what a price! The budgets of some of these shows wouldn't buy a kitchen sink on one of those spectaculars—even in black and white.

All of this brings up the question. Why aren't more of these programs sponsored? They're bargains at the price—and the price is right.

It seems to me that the main reason is that there's a tendency to put a halo around such shows. Everybody appears to be afraid to tarnish the halo by turning it into a money-making brass ring. There are too many in television and in education, too, who think, as they did when they were in radio, that public-service shows *must* be sustainers. Tain't so.

I offer you two shining examples: "See It Now" and "Meet the Press." No one can deny that both are informational, popular and in the public service. And Alcoa, Revere Copper, Pan American, et al., would be among the first to admit they are commercial.

A commercial tag on a public-service show—and this may be news to others in the broadcasting business as it was to me—does not make that show seem less worthy to the F.C.C. The fact remains that any show of quality is a public service.

In addition to everything else, just think of the variety and interest in turning the tv cameras on the world as it really is. I've seen a bunch of kids put on a circus all by themselves, an activity that gave them and their contemporaries a lot more fun than watching professionals. There was another bunch of kids who also took a trip "On the Carousel" and built a house from the ground up—right in front of the television cameras. There are numerous other such instances that prove that tv need not saddle its viewers with a passive "spectatoritis" but can help inform and educate while it entertains.

I honestly believe shows in the category I've discussed have at this moment the freshest approach to entertainment in the business. There's gold in them thar hills if someone will just start digging.

You Got To Have Warmth

By SOL SAKS

Hollywood.

Outside of money, which is of course unimportant to a writer as my various employers have finally convinced me, the only tangible evidence I have that I am really a television writer is that now people ask me how to become one.

Because—and let us face this with the honesty and courage that has made this nation the great country it is today—there are people who want to be television writers.

Since my only son is going to be a cowboy (which shows you how much smarter he is than I was; at his age I wanted to be a writer and it took me all this time to find out I really want to be a cowboy) I have no reluctance about passing the formula on to strangers.

If people want to become television writers, I say that's their lookout. I'll tell them how and can only hope that encouraging people to become television writers does not get this issue of VARIETY banned from the mails.

"If you want to be a writer," he said. "Learn to write."

Well! I was just ambitious enough to try anything. I spent four years at Northwestern's School of Journalism; months on end listening to every radio program; years writing, rewriting and rewriting scripts. After nine years I went back to see the kindly old philosopher. He's even more bent now after I hit him over the head with my rejected manuscripts.

A very obvious way to become a writer is to have a successful producer as a father. However, this is almost as difficult as becoming a writer yourself; and then, too, people are prejudiced against the relatives of successful men—a prejudice that is usually shared by the successful men themselves. The proof of this is that Milt Josefsberg who, as everyone knows, is Cy Howard's legitimate son by a previous marriage (the names are true, only the facts have been changed to protect the innocent) was unable to get a job until he changed his name.

So all right already, how do you get to be a television writer?

I can best tell you by relating the actual way I found out. I was brought from Hollywood to New York to work on a show that was in trouble. It may seem strange that they sent for me, since I had been fired from my three previous jobs, but that's one of the tricks of being a producer; if you've got a show that's in trouble, get a writer who's in trouble. It's the same theory as putting a person who's never ridden a horse on a horse that's never been ridden so that they can both start from scratch. But let's not talk about how to be a producer, we can save that for another article.

When I got to New York some friends met me at the station. I hadn't seen them in a long time, so in celebration we visited various places of entertainment and imbibed quite freely of the spirits and . . . (oh come on Saks write it the way Hemingway would) . . . I got swacked.

Also Tres Malade

In the morning I just had time to shower and change clothes and get over to the private dining room where I was to meet the producer, the star, the sponsor and the vicepresident of the agency for a sort of welcoming lunch. I walked into that dining room with a head bigger than the whole blooming network. I managed to get through the introductions and began to think I might be able to last through the lunch when somebody put a plate of crabmeat salad in front of me. From then on I just sat there with head lowered, fighting to keep my stomach down.

They were talking about audience potentials (I'll go into *that* in my article on how to be an agency executive) when it occurred to me that since they had gone to certain expense and trouble to get me there I should say something. So, at the very next lull in the conversation I lifted my head and said:

"What this show needs is warmth." These words had a worse effect on my stomach than the crabmeat, so I hurriedly put my head back down and didn't say another word through the entire lunch.

On the way out, the producer put his arm around my shoulder.

"The veep likes you," he said in congratulation. "He just told me. He said, that fellow Saks doesn't talk much, but when he says something. . . ."

So there it is. All you have to do is get a crew cut, wear dark rimmed glasses, smoke a pipe and at any lull in the conversation say, "It's got to have warmth," and your only problem will be to keep your money in different banks because each account is insured up to only $10,000.

To avoid being repetitious you can also use the other phrases like, "audience identification . . . underlying story theme . . . common denominator of entertainment, etc." But you'll find yourself relying more and more on the warmth bit.

Personally, I've got so much warmth lately, I'm getting gamey.

FAMILY PORTRAITS

By SAM LEVENSON

The night before his road test papa was delirious. Though he slept he practiced driving until he drove mama out of bed, and his breath came in spurts like overheated radiator water, but by dawn he was lucid and certain he would remember everything. Nor did his clam optimism desert him until he arrived at the scene of the test, later referred to on the records as the "Scene of the Accident." The inspector verified papa's candidacy and said, "Well, get in. What are you waiting for?" Papa said, "I forgot how to open the door."

Sam Levenson

In the car, the inspector said, "First, back up." Gently, papa's car backed, mounted the sidewalk, and rested against an apartment building. "Don't get excited," said the inspector. "Shift." Papa shifted all the way back to Reverse, and fed gas, but neither car nor building moved. Again he shifted, again to Reverse. No motion apparent. Papa turned apologetically to the inspector and said, "I'm sorry. I must be out of gas."

Then, resigned, he attempted to find neutral and the car went 20 yards to a tree. It was only a minute before papa came to, but already a large crowd had materialized, complete with a man selling balloons. "What happened?" asked the inspector.

"I thought I got hit from behind," said papa, "So I put on the brake, let go the clutch, shifted with one hand, signalled with the other—when suddenly, seeing no hands on the steering wheel, I realized nobody was driving, so I fainted."

* * * *

We had a cat in our house. Not that we were lovers of domestic animals, or that we could afford one. It was strictly a matter of self-defense. Either feed a cat, or live with mice.

So we entered into a gentleman's agreement with a cat selected at random—a commission deal—she chased mice and we gave her carte blanche use of the garbage pail. And we called the party of the second part Hamlin.

She was sworn in by my father as she held one paw on the pail, in the presence of the eight children as witnesses.

Things went along okay for a while except for the occasional frightful screams when somebody would step on her paws. As mama said: "Who tells her to walk around barefoot?"

Then it began: the serenades from the backyard fences—the call of the wild. Our cat went AWOL, staying out all night. She was no longer the innocent, playful little kitten. Obviously she was out for more than the gentle stroke of a human hand across her fur.

One morning there was a litter of kittens in the victrola and more mouths to feed. We gave the kittens away but kept Hamlin, hoping that her sex-urge might diminish with time, or that she would mend her ways. Next year there was a repeat performance. We felt that this was a breach of contract. We called a council and decided to break the contract.

We blindfolded the cat, put her in a shoebox, took the 3d Ave. trolley, transferred at 125th St., went west to the Hudson River, put the box down in front of a sausage factory, and went home.

When we walked into the house four hours later there was the cat in the kitchen again, looking as if nothing happened. I'll never forget the way she looked at me.

She stayed with us another five years and had 40 more kittens. When we moved she refused to leave the apartment. We had to leave her behind.

* * * *

PROVERB: EVERYONE WANTS TO LIVE LONG, BUT NO ONE WANTS TO GET OLD.

There is such a thing, as a beautiful old age, to see one's children mature, get married, produce grandchildren, and come to visit and to do honor to their parents.

Here's a touching story:

The old man's seven sons came to visit him on his birthday. They brought him presents and spent several hours with him in pleasant conversation. Toward the end of the evening the old man said: "Would somebody be good enough to bring me a glass of water?" All the sons rose as one. This presented a problem. Papa couldn't drink seven glasses of water. And which son would be given the honor of serving his father? Each one argued his case: "I'm the oldest." "I'm the youngest." "I'm his favorite." One of them got an idea: "I'll donate $100 to the Red Cross in papa's name for the privilege." Someone else offered $200.

The eldest then rapped for order. "My brothers," he said, "The honor of serving one's father is so great that there is not one amongst us who deserves it. The honor should go to papa himself. Hey, Pop, go and get yourself a glass of water!"

Not In Our Stars But In Ourselves

By ROBERT MONROE

(Radio-TV Producer)

Along Madison Avenue, they won't trouble themselves enough to attend the funeral. The pallbearers from Sales and Programming are ready with the casket and condolences, outwardly grief stricken; yet, as they pull the lid over the unwilling victim with one hand, the other reaches for the glamorous daughter.

The King is dead. How many times do we have to kill him!) Long live the Princess.

It might not be as bad as that, but almost everyone else seems to think so. The network radio pulse beats more slowly each season, suffocating under the glare of the Radio You Look Into. Neilsen says it's so. O'Neil and Sarnoff say it is and it isn't. The rest of us sit and listen.

For a long time, we've sat and listened. From our sitting position, we've seen tv rightfully take the ball (melon?) from radio, run far ahead with it. For what does radio do, with the exception of news and music, that tv can't do as well or better; with tv you also get a picture.

Now that we're standing, finally, we can say that the whole thing is no surprise. Radio had it coming. During the past seven years of rising tv, the AM industry carried on in basically the same old rut of stagnation, imitation, and strangling tradition. Sales Management came up with Multi-Message, Tandem Plans, and the rest—sedatives, not remedies. Programming came up with More of the Same for Less Money.

Everything in radio is like every other thing, and has been for years. The best anyone can think of is another mystery show, another disk jockey, another newscast. System cues must always be sober, serious, formal. Announcers must sound like announcers are supposed to sound. A show must have a Billboard, a Middle Break, a Tease. Time must be segmented into one, five, 15, or 30-minute periods. A different approach, one not in tradition with the standards of radio, can not possible survive the Network plus the Agency plus the Client (if any!).

You Also Get a Picture

Nothing unexpected—and subsequently interesting—ever happens on Radio. If it does, it's a mistake. Why bother listening! You know what you're going to hear before you hear it: Nothing now, or exciting, nothing you can't afford to miss, and television gives you the same thing, plus a picture.

Well, all this seems negative, and it is. The rut is deep; it continued, it well could turn into a grave. Perhaps the only way to get out is by some gigantic leap. The direction is actually unimportant. Something, anything should be tried before the earth is shoveled for the interment.

What to try? The woods are full of ideas, and who can say if they're good or bad? Informal programming, meaning spur-of-the-moment scheduling to keep the listener curious as to what comes next; throw out the formality all the way, revert to the medium radio truly is—a medium of intimate contact, a companion to human beings wherever they go. Let television become the Movie House in the Home, the Big Show with the Stuffed Shirt. For entertainment, Television. For companionship, Radio.

Travel with radio. Only radio can take you around the world—to any place on earth—at a moment's notice. With tape, radio literally can go where television can't and never will. Local facilities are such that AM could originate in a different part of the country every 15 minutes throughout the day, obtain the exclusivity that will bring audience.

The worst a network could do might be to become strictly a station-servicing organization, and forget about National sponsors. There is no pretense here to know the economics of the matter, but local stations will continue to be serviced in some manner. Can a pure program service by a network justify itself financially?

Or in the extreme, how about a division among the networks for specialized listening? Tune the station, according to your preference at the moment. One becomes the Music Network, another the Drama Network, the third the News Network, the fourth the Sports Network, and so on. No need to look at the program schedule, you'll get drama *when* you want it, the same with music—you'll know the station by its *type* of program. The division of audience should be equitable under such a plan, and television couldn't match it for years. (The principle is already being applied at local levels, with music-and-news, sports stations, and block dramatic programming.)

To put it all together, fully half of radio's best programming originated among independent producers. Perhaps they feel now that they're being left out. The networks are trying to handle radio's problems all by themselves. All they have to do is ask.

As for asking: Who's buying all those millions of radio sets each year. Ghosts?

Telecasters Decry N. Y. — H'wood 'Monopoly'

Continued from page 91

tial in various parts of the country. They can certainly proceed in confidence that their affiliates can and will measure up to the demands which are made upon them, and that their efforts will be met with enthusiastic support of the communities cooperating in the originations. The project should result in a much deeper and richer pattern of television."

'Too Much N.Y.-L.A. Stamp': Sugg

Says P. A. Sugg, of WKY-TV, Oklahoma City:

"There is little doubt that recognition of the over-centralization of network originations in New York and Hollywood will be unanimous within the broadcast industry. At the same time, however, most of us realize that these entertainment centers have the advantage of a vastly greater talent pool than do a majority of the smaller communities boasting broadcast outlets and more adequate facilities for the larger multi-set dramatic productions and "spectacular" variety programs.

P. A. Sugg

"The glaring drawback to this centralization, on the other hand, particularly to those of us in the midwest, southwest and west, is the stereotyped nature of such productions which unmistakably stamp them as New York or Hollywood as the case may be, and reflect for the most part the New York and/or Hollywood ideas as to what constitutes entertainment which will appeal to the country as a whole.

"This, as the recently popular song says, 'ain't necessarily so!' More often than not, the New York/Hollywood notion of what will appeal to the great majority of their television audience, which populates the area east of the Los Angeles City Limits and west of the Hudson River, is as erroneous as their portrayal of a midwesterner as a country bumpkin in a straw hat and coveralls.

"One of our greatest pleasures in life here at WKY-TV, in the heart of the 'untamed wild-west' of Oklahoma, is to take New York network and agency personnel on a tour of our facilities and watch their eyes open and their jaws drop as they see our two completely equipped 40 by 60 foot tv stages, one of which is fully operational in color television on a regular daily basis, using three color cameras. Seven monochrome cameras are employed as needed within the two studios and are used for remote pickups with our $100,000 mobile unit.

"These same 'cosmopolites' are equally amazed at our complete production facilities and our available talent roster of some 25 singers, dancers, dramatic and comedy personalities and musicians, of network calibre, who are employed on our locally originated variety programs. One of these, our 'Sooner Shindig,' not the strictly 'hoe-down' opus that the name would imply, is produced on a weekly basis in color and has been for many weeks now. It's Saturday, 9 p. m. rating is topped only by NBC's 'Hit Parade,' the highest rated Saturday evening program, in the Oklahoma City area according to the October Hooper Survey, Jackie Gleason not withstanding.

"We feel that we could be prepared to feed a 30-minute variety show of network calibre to a network audience, in either color or monochrome, with about 72 hours notice, and continue to do so on a weekly basis. This is not made merely as an idle boast but as an indication of our confidence in the capabilities of our production, art and engineering staff and our operational facilities.

"Network television might well receive a refreshing stimulus if the network planners would give some thought to a survey of affiliate territories for possible network program possibilities rather than considering New York and Hollywood as the 'end and all' of the American entertainment scene."

Miami Stakes Coin on It

Mitchell Wolfson, of WTVJ, Miami, points out his station and the cities of South Florida have been working toward making that area an originating centre for network programs for the past three years—in fact long before Dec. 31, 1952, when the first northbound cable service from Miami to N. Y. became available. The shows that have originated from WTVJ, he points out, have proved beyond a doubt that the originations are of vast benefit to both the sponsor and the area.

"The most outstanding proof of the 'pull' of a Miami Beach origination was the 'Arthur Godfrey and His Friends' program which was staged from the Kenilworth Hotel in Bal Harbour in March, 1953. This program garnered an almost unbelievable ARB rating of 73. In addition, newspaper, television, magazine and trade publicity centered around the origination rated space that represented millions of dollars.

"The yearly Orange Bowl Game on New Year's Day from Miami has become one of the nation's top sports attractions. WTVJ has originated this spectacle for CBS-TV for the past two years and will do so again on Jan. 1, 1955. The recent rights agreement signed by CBS to the tune of $825,000 over the next three years attests to the value of this origination.

"A brief rundown of the originations which WTVJ has done for the television networks during the past two years includes eight Pabst fights, the Don McNeil Show for two weeks in the Spring of 1954, an insert of Sophie Tucker's act from the Copa for 'Toast of the Town,' feature stake races from Hialeah and Gulfstream Parks, the 1952 and 1953 Orange Bowl Parades, major league exhibition baseball, the 'Home' show, Walter Winchell, the Mel Allen sports show and six Bayuk fights. The station has complete remote facilities and a staff of experienced personnel for this work.

"In all cases, the rating of a network program originated from Miami or Miami Beach has jumped locally because of the extra publicity and promotion. The cities of Miami and Miami Beach have become so convinced of the pulling power of television that both cities have appropriated advertising funds for the exclusive purpose of getting network shows originated from the area. These funds have been primarily allocated to help defray the additional cable costs incurred by the Florida origination. In addition, Hank Meyer, Miami Beach publicity director, and Woody Kepner, Miami publicity director will both place their entire organizations at the disposal of the network producers when they come to south Florida. Hotels and other Miami showplaces also cooperate by furnishing rooms and facilities for the publicity returned.

"It is our feeling that 'out of town' originations help all television in that these shows renew interest in the medium by getting away from the same stale settings. *Television has the potential of showing all of America to its citizens. It can and should do that job.* Sponsors will find that such a program will earn them many additional viewers and customers; television generally will find that it is in less danger of being stereotyped and the origination cities will receive a return in publicity value impossible from any other medium."

John H. DeWitt Jr. of WSM-TV in Nashville has this to say: "The fine comments which we have had on our recent eight feeds to Dave Garroway's 'Today' and our one feed to Steve Allen's 'Tonight' in connection with the WSM Country Music Disk Jockey Festival indicates that networks would do well to pick up programs from other parts of the country as much as possible. There must be many sources of programs of less sophistication and great charm over the country."

Polonius Had the Right Idea

Or hark to the words of D. L. (Tony) Provost, the WBAL-TV, Baltimore, factotum and veepee-general manager of the Radio-TV Division of the Hearst Corp.:

"Even before Polonius delivered his classic advice from father to son oration he told the boy to get out of town and see the world starting with Paris, as I recall, which is a tribute to the old fellow's understanding.

"There is no argument with the spectacular or the name-show promotions. New York and Hollywood have long been the show business centers of the world. Their output is as much a part of our lives as the daily newspaper and could no more be denied.

"But the character of a network rests not with these programs. It rests with the extras the network offers, with the network's willingness to break through the barrier of the norm.

"Specifically it is a challenge to the network's special events department, which in turn must be given the latitude wherewith to do the job.

"In these respects NBC has shown an awareness of the challenge and an increasing desire to expand its remotes.

"From our station WBAL-TV in Baltimore, where we have the facilities, the personnel and the know-how to handle feeds, we have piped shows to the network on various occasions. When Baltimore's port facilities were jammed as a result of the New York dock strike our cameras carried the picture to the nation; the excitement of Baltimore's re-entry into major league baseball we fed to the "Today" show; and just recently the entire network witnessed the pandemonium when three Baltimore children were turned loose to loot a toy shop.

"These were worthwhile special events. There are, however, many, many more still uncovered.

"Wouldn't the nation like to watch, for instance, the graduation exercises from the Naval Academy in Annapolis?

"Wouldn't the nation be fascinated with the celebrity-loaded annual spectacle of the Maryland Hunt Cup, or perhaps the colorful blessing of the hounds by a minister on Thanksgiving Day just before a hunt in Maryland's Worthington Valley?

"Of course it would and the important thing is—the sooner the better.

"Network coverage of strong remote events can only result in stronger ratings. It is a rule of thumb that the people thereby will feel a closer identity with the network willing to go to them.

"Get out of town, by all means.

"And we'll be ready when you come our way."

Says George F. Hartford, veepee for television at WTOP, Washington:

"The rare exception to the New York-Hollywood monopoly is Washington, which has a tremendous reservoir of talent; i.e., government personalities. Because of this oasis in the talent desert, the networks do originate some educational and interesting shows from the Nation's Capital. I feel that because of this practically untapped source, the networks would be wise to originate more shows from Washington. Not only is Congress full of great personalities, but the various departments of the government are loaded with the most interesting and learned people in the world today. Aside from Washington, however, there is no other place in the U. S. able to do the job like Hollywood or New York.

Color an Important Factor

"Still another important reason for not moving out of N. Y. or Hollywood is color. If you could visit the CBS Color Studios on upper Broadway, you would see the most complex and costly set up for telecasting a show imaginable. I don't know what would happen if color shows had to be done "out of town." More important than the tremendous expense of equipping such a studio is the knowledge of how to use color. With the best brains in the business today working on these color telecasts, they are far from perfection. I hate to think what would happen if we had to originate color shows in the hinterlands where equipment and personnel are both lacking.

"Another important item not to be overlooked is the very close liaison between the networks and the advertising agencies. All the big agencies are located in either New York or Hollywood and most of them maintain offices in both cities. To spread out network telecasting from Maine to Texas and from Florida to Oregon would cause the various advertising agencies tremendous overhead in operation costs. Not only that, but it would spread out capable personnel to such an extent that it would be very difficult to work effectively.

"When you stop and analyze the wonderful conditions under which the networks operate in these two strategic centers of stage and screen personalities, I think it would be both unwise and uneconomical to do network shows from "out of town" originations. Again, I reiterate the one big exception to the above is Washington, where, I think, it would be wise if all the networks stepped-up their originations, because the whole country is vitally interested in our Government."

You Can Write For TV

By LOU DERMAN

Hollywood.

Today's tv writers fall into three categories:

(a). BEGINNERS: those who never wrote anything before and come to the new medium with fresh, unspoiled lack of talent.

(b). TRANSITIONERS: confused radio writers.

(c). TV PROS: writers who began writing for tv years before it was invented.

This article is intended primarily for the Transitioners—those poor souls still writing for radio, wish they could switch to tv, but all they know is a term or two like Lap Dissolve which they vaguely conceive as meaning water on the knee.

Transitioners, take heart.

Tv writing is not difficult.

Anyone who can write a prize novel, a hit play or an award-winning movie can write for the new medium. As they say: a good writer is a good writer in any field and if you take the following tips, you can write for tv:

(1). USE TV JARGON. Buy a good book on TV Writing and learn the technical terms. For instance, in tv it is considered amateurish to write: "Ella goes to the door." In tv scripts, Ella never goes to a door. She CROSSES to a door. (*You and I know in our hearts that Ella really goes to a door, but play it smart; if the tv producer wants her to CROSS, CROSS her, don't walk her.*) So, remember the first rule: People CROSS to places—they don't go, walk, run, slide, hop, skip, jump, or flop. They CROSS. Pepper your tv script with lots of CROSSES and already you've doubled your worth to your producer.

(2). USE LOTS OF BIZ. Biz means your characters must always be doing something *while* they're talking. In real life, as we all know, two people don't just sit in a room and talk. They would be carted off to a booby hatch. In real life, while people talk, they always knit, crochet, play cards, sip coffee or cocktails, balance a rubber ball on their fingers, play jai alai or dig wax out of their ears. It may seem strange to you at first, but remember: we are all going through BIZ every day of our lives. Even while we sleep we all do the Snoring Bit.

I can perhaps best illustrate the proper use of BIZ by quoting excerpts from a tv script which I sold recently to the Emily Kronz Playhouse. Note my opening:

"AT OPEN, CAM. DOLLIES IN FOR C. U. TO SHOW . . ."

I must stop for a moment.

Notice my ingenious use of TV Jargon. Notice how sauciliy I abbreviate the word "Camera" and how casually I chop the word "closeup" into C.U. And please don't laugh. Many a top tv writer is really a radio writer who learned to abbreviate.

We go on with my script:

SALLY: Harold?

HAROLD: Yes, dear?

Over above lines, Sally has been pulling taffy with Harold, she has pulled the taffy too hard and it snaps back at Harold who does wobbly biz then falls hard to floor. Over Harold's line above, we do biz of Sally helping Harold to his feet, Harold doing comedy fall biz over hassock, upsetting goldfish bowl which stains rug, then Harold does biz of trying to eradicate stain with stain remover but cam. does biz of showing in c.u. that it's really axle grease."

Notice? My characters have used only three words so far, but already I have cleverly worked in 12 minutes of BIZ.

Remember: tv is for the eye, not the ear, and if you refuse to create BIZ, you lay yourself open to the charge of being Audio-Minded, which is the same as being called "bloody" in England.

So much for BIZ. We proceed finally to:

(3). CAMERA DIRECTIONS. It is a well-known fact among tv people that cameramen are poor, befuddled people and have no idea what to do with their big clumsy cameras while the actors are busy acting, therefore:

It is the Writer's job to help him. To clearly indicate where each camera should be placed in every stage of the production, the angle of view that should be used, the type of lens that is needed, and the approximate Exposure Meter Reading that would be desirable. The extra-careful writer will tack onto his script his recommendation for the type of film to be used and his own pet development formula.

By including these specific directions in his scripts the Writer saves the cameraman the painful embarrassment of admitting his ignorance before the director, who like as not, is the cameraman's sarcastic brother-in-law.

Tv Camera Directions are quite simple and here they are:

(1). THE CLOSE SHOT. Use this shot to show only the head.

(2). THE MEDIUM SHOT. Shows a person from head to navel.

(3). THE LONG SHOT. Shows people and furniture and actors peeping in from the wings, nervously waiting to go on.

There are also MEDIUM-CLOSE SHOTS, CLOSE-LONG SHOTS, and LONG-LONG SHOTS but these cannot be used by anybody except Paddy Chayefsky who owns the exclusive copyright.

Makeup, Anyone?

I was signed to appear on the Spade Cooley show (CBS) at nite. In the afternoon I went to see the NBC Studios in Hollywood. Jimmy Durante was rehearsing, so I went looking for him. Someone suggested "makeup room," so I walked in with my brother Les, a non-professional. Durante wasn't there, but the makeup man said "sit down" to us. We did, and he made us both up. That nite I appeared on CBS with NBC makeup, and my brother sat in the audience with the makeup on and watched the show.

Henny Youngman.

How To Stop Price War In Syndication

By CARL M. STANTON
(NBC V. P. In Charge of the Film Division)

Carl M. Stanton

In March, 1953, when the NBC Film Division was set up as a separate operating division of the company, the business of syndicating television film programs to local stations and to local and regional sponsors was immature and relatively chaotic. Established syndicators were facing grave problems. The NBC Film Division faced not only these same problems but also the urgent need to establish its own identity in the field.

One of the biggest problems facing the industry at the time was an attitude on the part of certain station managers and a small segment of the press toward the re-run tv film series. In establishing its own identity the NBC Film Division also helped solve the re-run problem—through a vigorous educational campaign which was climaxed, earlier this year, by VARIETY'S coveted "Showmanagement" award.

Now, as the NBC Film Division approaches its second anniversary and film syndication approaches maturity, we face another grave problem: a price war.

The great strides made by the film syndication business during the past two years—and its significant contribution to the progress of television as a whole—can be consolidated next year only if syndicators stamp out the current epidemic of drastic price cutting, and particularly the short-run deals which threaten to undermine the industry.

Television film syndicators and producers must stop throwing stardust into the eyes of their financial backers, many of whom have been deluded into believing that the syndicated film business is an Eldorado from which they can realize a quick profit on their investment.

When the hard facts come to light—that it may take nearly two years to recoup investment and costs—the angels are thrown into a panic. The product is dumped on the market, the market is glutted and the vicious cycle of price-cutting and short-run deals begins.

This business can survive only if syndicators finance and expand their inventory on a realistic, regulated basis. A frantic effort to assemble quickly a dazzling array of properties, on the other hand, financed by pitchman promises of quick profits, can result only in price cutting and short term deals. The evidence, in the form of distressed property unloading, is already all around us.

Threat To Quality Pix

If all syndicators are forced to cut their prices and release tv film series in terms, far short of their normal runs, film programs of superior quality will ultimately be driven off the air. The programming standards of the entire industry will be debased because it will be worth no one's while to invest large sums in programs of high quality.

Since it takes nearly two years to recoup the original investment and costs of a really good syndicated tv film series, the acceptance of short-term deals—coupled with price slashes—certainly extends the time needed merely to break even. To make any kind of a profit at all would take even longer. Very clearly, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to produce new programs which are a credit to broadcasting if someone doesn't call an armistice in the current price war.

The picture is not, of course, totally black. There are profits to be realized in film syndication.

(Continued on page 201)

TV Drama An Open Door For The Creative Writer

By JOHN GIBBS
(Authors' Representative and Producer)

John Gibbs

"Wonderful show last night. Why don't you give us a drama like that every week?" This question (which I hear now and then from my aunt in Wisconsin, from the elevator man, or from the sponsor) is one of the assorted aspirin-proof headaches that go with being in the television business. And so is the answer: You don't put on a first rate drama every week because you can't find a good one to put on every week in the year. There aren't that many good scripts. The next question obviously is: Why not?

If every really talented writer in the United States were also a skilled dramatic technician, and if there were the right inducements for him to write for television, then—perhaps—there might be enough worth-while scripts to go around for most of television's dramatic shows. Maybe. (The field of the novel is supposedly open to all with talents and the hardihood to get them on paper; yet for a nation of 160,000,000 people, we turn out a fantastically small showing in the realm of creative fiction in print. The why of that is no doubt complex, and I've got enough to do right now trying to state our television dilemma, and suggest some possible solutions.)

There are a few really talented writers working in the television medium. We need many more. Granted that in this medium there are more restrictions imposed on the writer than in any other, I believe there are also very great rewards for the writer willing and able to overcome the handicaps. (These rewards are not merely monetary, either.)

The most important asset a talented writer has is time; time in which to write. That's what I hope those writers I represent are doing **right now: writing.** But if some of them are procrastinating, and wasting time by reading these remarks, I would like to say quickly that while I may sometimes have advised a compromise in line with the demands of agency or sponsor, and may do the same in the future, I believe that television is moving toward a better time for the creative writer. As a writers' representative, I have a duty toward my clients to sell their work . . . hence the occasional compromises with artistic or other standards too expensive for the average breadwinner to insist upon. I'd rather keep my good writers alive, at their own work, even at some slight cost to their pride, than have them starve or desert to less hazardous occupations. For the best of the battle-scarred survivors of compromise, I confidently hold out bright hopes for their much freer and happier future in television. The time has come when they should follow advice once given by (I believe) Thornton Wilder: "Look into your heart and write." (Okay, now you can go back to the typewriter. The rest of this is old stuff to you.)

The Nervous Client

The handicaps and limitations of the television medium, from the writer's point of view, are so trite it's hardly necessary to point them out. Television is big business, and nobody can logically blame an advertiser for being nervous about the impression he's going to make on millions of prospective customers. A thousand taboos and prejudices haunt him; he doesn't want, he's afraid he can't afford, to offend anyone's sensibilities, tastes, religion, origin, mode of life, choice of wife, friends or occupation. The drama he sponsors must walk lightly around all touchy toes. This poses, for the writer, a catalog of problems, ranging over a vast area: anything from the major question of how to handle a character of Victor Hugo's priest, in an adaptation of "The Hunchback of Notre Dame," to such a homely quandary as what to do about a kitchen scene in which the heroine is baking bread . . . when the sponsor's whole reason for buying the program happens to be that he is a commercial baker. These are mild examples of the hazards the writer faces in a commercial field, and they make his job a tough one. They help to explain the many warped and watered versions of once-strong drama, revised for television. They explain the many weak, pedestrian television "originals." They are partly to blame for the paucity of the good scripts we need and want. But I don't think these hazards should stop the real writer. They haven't stopped the few fine talents that are tackling television, and giving it both scope and hope.

There are more handicaps to overcome, however. The creative writer is usually a touchy soul; and why not? If he weren't sensitive, he couldn't receive and transmit the impressions that are the life of his work and the work of his life. In any field he has his problems. Publishers have something to say about books; editors about magazine stories; theatrical experts about tender new plays. Modifying forces are at work, on all sides, to improve the writer's efforts; to make him more understandable; more salable; and lately, less assailable by nervous defenders of mediocrity.

Television is the new concentrate of all the hazards that in other fields have always bedeviled the writer. Television is the brimming cup, the modern instant witches' brew of familiar ingredients many times compounded.

The obvious restrictions of the medium itself are the least of the trouble. A skillful writer can learn to write within the unnatural, unyielding time-framework of television. He can turn the limitations of space and other mechanical difficulties to his advantage. The big trouble for the television writer (with very few exceptions) is that he's been lost in the rush and the hurly-burly. A television production is a complicated, cumbersome, nerve-racking operation, with inhuman difficulties to be conquered and endless miscellaneous problems to solve: all of them a lot more important, in the opinion of many, than some unseen little character who wrote the script that everybody's been doctoring from revision to revision.

You Can't Excuse a Poor Script

But what is the whole complicated operation all about, if not a story, a set of characters, evolved in the mind and heart of a writer? If the script is so poor it has to be completely altered or virtually ignored, what is all the rest but empty gesture?

A poor script is a crime against all the other brave talents concerned: actors, director, scene designer, cameramen, everyone. But a good script, used with respect, is an inspiration to all, and it is the only justification for the man-killing labor involved, for everyone from actors to stagehands, in putting on a live television drama. When the script is given its rightful place as the number one consideration, the real basis for the production, then you can get first rate television . . . sound from the ground up.

Good writers have sometimes suffered because the inferior work of others has tended to push the television writer aside, as a not entirely necessary nuisance.

"Some directors look on a writer's script about the way a carpenter looks on a board: as a piece of crude material he might be able to turn into a cabinet or some other finished product he has in mind." Direct quote from a writer, heretofore known for the originality and perfection of his work.

This kind of complaint never happens when a good writer and a good director are teamed. As a producer, I consider this combination an absolute essential to a fine production. Respect for good writing is the first attribute I look for in a topflight director. Now I'm looking for more topflight writing to keep everybody happy . . . the brilliant directors, my Aunt in Wisconsin, the elevator man, and the sponsor.

Maybe some of this writing will come from people now masquerading as formula-writers, conformists-out-of-necessity. And there must be other original, creative writers, besides the few now doing the best television dramas; writers who would like to be heard by an enormous audience; who would have serious respect for that audience and the medium that reaches it. I have no patience with the cynical attitude of the facile, opportunistic writer who regards television as an easy way to make good money; nor with the intellectual snob who regards the medium as something too vulgar for serious consideration. Vulgar it is in the classic sense of the word—nothing more wonderfully vulgar was ever known. When has a man ever before had the chance to be heard so "vulgarly"—i.e., by **such** a multitude? An audience of millions, all at one time; that should be a challenging, and a humbling, thought for any man fortunate enough to be allowed the privilege of their attention. And if it isn't worth the best effort a writer is capable of, then nothing has ever been worth the lifting of a pen.

But how can a writer give his best when he can't write freely, without checking a long list of taboos? He can try. Many of the minor taboos are unimportant. And I've known even some of the major ones to give way before the impressive force of a real talent. I would respectfully urge writers to have a little more tolerance for the understandable taboos imposed by sponsors (sometimes imposed against their own personal preference). And I would respectfully urge sponsors to have a little more courage, a little more confidence in the intelligence of the "multitude."

Wanted: Original Drama

I don't say that Greek drama is for mass consumption, today. In fact I'd much rather—naturally—see a lively demand for fresh, original writing by contemporary talent. But I do have enough faith in the intelligence of the great majority of Americans to believe that they can spot a phony across the longest living room in the land, and through the slickest production a clever staff can manage. They know when you've wasted their time with empty trickery and paper doll characters. They can taste the difference between water and wine. They also know, gratefully and enthusiastically, when you have given them something sound, alive and breathing, something with a blood of truth and reality in it.

This blood and beat of life has to originate with the writer. If any writer is still reading this, I'd like to tell him: Stop trying to invent fantastic plots. Don't talk your story; write. But before you write, "Look into your heart." Listen to your own memory, heed your own reactions, emotions, impressions; think about the world and the people you know. You've probably always wanted to write about some person, or some experience, that made a profound impression on you. If you are a really creative writer, this is your material—not some tricky plot and stereotype characters you think come close to fitting "the formula they want."

Human relationships, the individual in relation to the ordinary facets and problems of living, man in relation to nature, these all have, inherently, dramatic conflict of the sort that only a real writer can see and feel; that only a real writer can treat with authority, imagination and originality. They are among the eternal factors that will be important long after international conflicts have disappeared and been forgotten in peace and world-sanity. In treating honestly, imaginatively and compassionately of human, personal values, a writer, I believe, can come closest to the heart and intelligence of his audience. If this is important to writers, I think they can find television the most rewarding medium of all.

My Life & Times With UNIVAC

By CHARLES COLLINGWOOD
(CBS Commentator)

Ever since the Nov. 2 election, I have felt like the serious man's George Gobel. Having acted as UNIVAC's interpreter during that long, cryptic night, people regard me as an authority on the principles of the electronic brain. They even want me to explain the thing. I tell them to get in touch with Gobel—he taught me everything I know.

One thing about UNIVAC — never mind how he works—he was the hit of television's election coverage. As the evening wore on people began to take sides. When UNIVAC was predicting sizable Democratic majorities, a Republican from Ohio wired sourly, "obviously UNIVAC is a Democrat." But a lady from San Francisco wired that if Ed Murrow and Eric Sevareid, who were handling the heavy-duty analysis, would only pay more attention to UNIVAC, they would make more sense. He fascinated people and they began to give him a personality. People called up and wanted to argue with him.

When the election was over a number of editorial writers, television critics and commentators professed to take much comfort in the fact that UNIVAC's predictions were off a few seats in the House and the Senate. It showed, they felt, that man in his infinite and glorious irrationality could still fool the machine. But you could tell that Univac, humming away and blinking in his corner, had them worried for awhile. What if he *had* been right? He might have restored some people's faith in the power of reason, which would obviously have been bad news for editorial writers, television critics and commentators.

Actually, UNIVAC's performance wasn't nearly as bad as it was made out to be. At 8:28 that that evening, when the returns were just beginning to trickle in, he called the composition of the House within five seats of the eventual outcome. He started out giving the Democrats the Senate by a wide margin, but by around 2 a.m. he had it within one seat of the eventual outcome. What's more, from first to last he never varied from his prediction that the Democrats would win both houses of Congress. Flesh and blood analysts were changing their guess with every late return, and newspaper headlines had it a different way in every edition.

Well, let them sneer. UNIVAC doesn't care. He's got a steady job with Metropolitan Life and the rest of his family is well taken care of by U. S. Steel, the Atomic Energy Commission and other outfits who appreciate a guy with a head for figures who isn't afraid to make up his mind. UNIVAC just fools around with politics for the fun of it.

As for me, if UNIVAC wants to take a whirl at the next election, I'm his boy. We got to be good friends that night.

TV's Nose-Counting Game, Or 'An Audience For Every TV Show'

Whether You Get a Rating or Whether You Don't, It's a Seesaw Deal With Shibboleths Built In

By LEONARD TRAUBE

Great game, that tv audience measurement business. Get a high rating and you love your mother-in-law; take a shellacking on the competitive graphs and you hate everyone. You particularly hate the rating services. You might think you have a crackerjack show and you may even be right about that more times than you are wrong, but if this self--admiration doesn't square with the parabola people's fascinating little figures, you know you are the deadest of ducks, afraid to show up at your favorite haunts for fear that all the fingers of your very best friends will be pointed at you and you alone.

Come out of hiding, pal, and inhale some fresh air. Remove that gun from your temple, scram the psychiatrist's couch, throw another ulcer on the fire where it will join the rest of the gobbledygook, and remember—"there's an audience for every tv show."

What means a measurement, anyway? It's supposed to show how'ya doin'—first, and least, as a vanity operation, against the whole field of television; and second—as a sort of private postscript—against the opposing programs. You yourself have arranged it so that there are hardly any shows opposite each other that pitch competitive products. So product-wise, at least, you're in a pretty secure position to begin with. In fact, you don't know how well off you are, because if parallel-by-product programming ever gets launched as "the thing" to do, the whole business—not just part of it, as now—would be in the hands of the measurement boys and any entertainment notions you think are important can be tossed out the window. Television would then be strictly a counting house and the programs would be less than incidental.

Criterion For Sale

Of course, everyone says, "there's got to be some kind of criterion." If this is so, how come so many measurement companies, each with different techniques, different findings and different projections? If all of them are good, or at least good in part, then wouldn't simple logic dictate that the best of these parts be combined and everyone now paying the freight for the yardstick firms get together and pay for a single tote board? Under the prevailing "multiple" system, it's a business set up to spur the sale of straitjackets, paper and printing—just putty in the hands of those who, innocently ennough, produce an anarchistic setup in television.

Don't let the diabolical "divide and conquer" crowd pull that kind of tactic. Be as smart as you are when you are writing that immortal prose for the vicepresident in charge of copy, or when coming up with that bright new format, or when your nose for talent is at the top of its sniffing game. Don't let figures shape your whole business day (and far into the awful night, where men measuring your menus, compelled by the fates to remain awake forever, take it out on you by robbing you of the very sleep you need to counter their offensive in every waking moment). Separate yourself from "massmerization."

What you need is not a good stiff drink but something much more bromidic, a good stiff upper lip with which you can face reality. So what if your show is 10 or 15 points below the competition's? There must be *someone* looking at you? In fact, maybe you can afford to have fewer lookers than the show opposite you because, let us say you are selling a "big unit," an automobile. It's economically factiferous that you're going to sell fewer such "big dollar" units to the viewing mob than the turnover of your same-slot rival even if each show drew exactly the same number of dialers and all of them stayed straight through without fondling the knobs. Of course, it would be peachy for a program underwritten by a costly piece of merchandise to have three or four times as many tuner-inners, because that way you get a crack at a huge audience and you're bound to magnetize a given percentage of them over to the dealer handling your car. But leave us face it, must you suddenly throw in the old terrycloth because the other fellow happens to lure more—maybe lots more—viewers?

(Incidentally(doesn't the mail pull on the show mean anything to you any more? Or the fact that your sales are big or a lot better than you were led to expect against your lowbeat rating on the "official scoreboard"? And you have your own litle ways of determining which media are responsible for what, haven't you?).

'Operation Different'

'Tis all too true, of course, that some high-meter shows don't have as much product "sell" as some low-raters. Maybe you gotta get a different format or a different slot; different copy or theme; different leadership within the agency or even a different agency. That's quite a different situation, but the nose-counters are not your kettle of fish in this regard because—let us take candor by the horns—one rating outfit will say "thus" and another outfit "so" about your program on a given exposure; all you are left with is a flash act titled Thus & So and you cannot see the forest for the figures.

There's another act, even flashier. It's called Cause & Effect. Your premiere show is okay; maybe not such a much-a-much against the rival program, but okay; worth watching; maybe a few laughs; couple of nice dramatic moments; perhaps a vicarious thrill out of seeing someone showered with silver for spelling his name correctly or knowing what town he's from. Up comes the flight-by-night measurement savant to tell you the race is over while you're still struggling at the three-quarter turn, oblivious of it all. So what happens? The trades run the gruesome details; not that they want to hurt anybody, but the industry itself says this is the "criterion" or at least one of the recognized criteria, and since the trades also want to remain in business, they go along with the "evil."

At or about the same time, the consumer newspapers and magazines, coast to coast, are caused to become more and more conscious of the purely statistical stature of the opening show, whether or not the critics-columnists themselves saw the program. (Some newspapers even run the actual figures on occasion desplte the fact that this kind of intelligence is at best academic and of no possible interest to the lay reader.)

Meantime, the show could be getting better, perhaps even "great." It doesn't matter; the "die" has been cast. By the time the delayed, more penetrating measurement services are in with the "real" figures on the premiere show, it is often as not too late. You are lucky to get the stanza past its first cycle even though as the option time "13" mark approaches your program is in a state of fine development compared to your opening presentation. Over six, eight or 10 weeks, you actually have a good-sized audience. It may not be in the 10,000,000-or-so-homes class, but it's a good show and you are peddling your product besides. (Who knows what a "good" show is, by the way? To the agency, "good" may mean it sells; to the sponsor, it may merely mean prestige; to the performer, a big mail pull; to the product-pusher, a springboard-showcase for additional work; to the director, an exhilarating experience by reason of the particular specialty in staging that he wanted to push; to the cameraman, an ideal format for his lensing views; ad infinitum.)

The French Touch

One man's viande is another man's polson. Sponsor "A" enjoys a higher profit per unit-of sale than Sponsor "B." Within reason, he can usually afford a higher cost-per-thousand, assuming there's a decent-sized audience. In printed media, all advertisers theoretically enjoy the same circulation; in tv, the advertiser doesn't know what the circulation will be in advance, trusting that the rating will tell

(Continued on page 200)

Television's 'Chicago School' Carries On—Far From Chicago

By TED MILLS

(NBC-TV Producer)

About four o'clock in the afternoon, a few weeks ago, I was in Shannon's Bar, on Third Avenue, beer in hand, chatting with Jimmie Shannon. But it was official business: we were between takes of an audition pilot of "Crosstalk," a new NBC transoceanic television series. The Shannon's regulars had been swapping stories with some London regulars of George's pub, in London. We were relighting.

Ted Mills

Suddenly, a waiter called my name, and pointed at the phone booth, stuck in a corner a few feet away from the cameras, and the open mikes to London. It was a long distance operator. "Call for you from Africa," she said, and put me past a half-dozen British accents from London down to Nairobi, in Kenya. The director of the "background" crew there was on the wire.

The connection was terrible. I had to shout—and got scowls from the sound man behind the bar. But slowly, I pieced together from the sounds out of Nalrobi that the British there seemed to be trying to censor the crew from doing an honest story. I yelled at them to hold the wire, dashed out into the bar to the London mike, and asked our Bureau Chief in London—who was there—to see if he could clear it with the British Foreign Office. He ran off to phone, and I went back to the phone booth to shout a few story suggestions to Nairobi until he came back. He did, shortly, announcing London had cleared us, which I relayed to Nairobi. In less than four minutes, all told, I was back at the bar, sipping my beer, cameras rolling away as the boys at the bar chatted with London about barmalds, pausing in their conversation whenever a Third Avenue El went by.

As I thought about it, this somewhat ridiculous colloquy on three continents at first seemed more than a thousand miles and five-odd years away from the Friday night when I sneak-previewed a show tentatively called "Garroway At Large" in Chicago in April, 1949. My new show, "Background" was in the Public Affairs area, and I was getting angry calls from Nairobi about censorship, instead of angry calls from choreographers about floor space for a dance number. And the techniques for "Background" were different: we were using film as well as live cameras. Certainly, the budgets were a long way from the days in the Merchandise Mart, when Warren Wade in New York had authorized me a total budget of $250 for the first Garroway show, in which Dave got a spanking $14, and guest Louis Armstrong $25, and the scenery bill was $97.

The spirit that seemed to infuse what came to be called the "Chicago School" (thanks, I think, to a review of George Rosen's) was our eagerness to find programs, and techniques for doing them, which were not derivative from stake or movies, but were fresh, and indigenous to television itself, and to television only. Charlie Andrews, Dave's ubiquitous idea-man, deserves a lot of the credit. He was usually maddening in his insistence that "At Large" took place in a television studio, and we should never let the audience forget it. Directors Bob Banner and Bill Hobin kept hunting and finding new, "pure television" ideas with which to endow the disorderly reality of Studio A with electronic magic they couldn't have achieved any other way. Almost self-consciously, "Garroway At Large" hunted for what was new in, and peculiar to, the new medium.

Sought TV's Own Forms

Sipping by beer at Shannon's, I realized this hunt was true of our other Chicago shows, too, from 1949 on. We didn't try translating makebelleve of stage and screen into television forms, most of the time. We tried to find television's own forms—and looking back, we seem to have decided that exploiting live reality was the one thing television could do as no other communicative art before it. I remember discussing "Zoo Parade," and somebody saying it was the kind of show television could do best; audiences seem to have agreed for almost six years. In a show now called "They Stand Accused," going into its seventh year, I'd experimented using real-life lawyers and witnesses, working without script, in a courtroom drama; it seemed to me that on television (unlike stage or film house) real people in a fictional situation were more believable than simulated people reenacting a true story. It worked. Ben Park's 1949 "Portrait of America" and the Adrian Spies-Norman Felton "Crisis," both much-praised and short-lived, were further "Chicago School" experiments in successfully enticing the impact of drama out of real people, without games or cancer. And Charlie's brilliant "Stud's Place" similarly asked delightful real people to play themselves, without script, in a fictional situation. "Ding Dong School" is just one very real lady, trying to fool nobody.

Five years later, and a thousand miles due East, I was actually pretty much at the same stand, still believing—in fact, more than ever before—that television's capacity to poke its creative eye around reality is one of its great innovations in communications, and one whose showmanship has barely been scratched. From my months with "Home," I'd learned that the magazines have found American interest in non-fiction climbing way past fiction. And now, instead of one studio, and a hardy handful of Chicago pioneers, I was at headquarters, with full access to the help and extraordinary skills of the entire worldwide organization of NBC News—and particularly the counsel of a scowling genius named Reuven Frank. Now, instead of Studio A, Merchandise Mart, our "Background" cameras were poking (uncensored) around Nairobi, Africa, and our "Crosstalk" cameras were straddling the tables for ladies at Shannon's. It was still the same old search. It was a long way, and it wasn't long at all.

DAVID and RICKY sure are getting big, aren't they?

SYNDICATION: PARADOX OF '55

You Can't Go Wrong On the Manheim Poll

By MANNIE MANHEIM

Each year at this time our little band of pollsters venture forth to feel the pulse of the great American public. We are not medicine men—we are pulse men. And women. We do not compete with Nielsen, Gallup, Trendex or the others in determining what the people are viewing on their television machines—and we do not question for one moment the accuracy of the aforementioned pulse-feelers. Our group dismisses them with a shrug which when translated means "They've got to eat, too."

Mannie Manheim

This year's subject of our survey was "Are panel shows crooked?" And this is how we approach the populace. We have no gadget attached to a TV set as Mr. Nielsen has, and we have no laboratory such as Dr. Gallup operates—we simply accept the fact that the population of the country today is approximately 160,000,000 and we cut that in half by eliminating 80,000,000 kids. As our group specializes only in adult polling, that leaves us with 80,000,000 people to poll.

The question before us now is—how do we call 80,000,000 people to determine whether panel shows are crooked or not. We couldn't phone 80,000,000 people as that would take days—and our cash on hand, including our petty cash, was far short of 80,000,000 dimes to defray cost of the calls. To offset this deficiency, we agreed on the old 80-1 ratio of polling—which to the layman means that we made 80 calls—or one to each million of people. To our way of thinking this is quite representative and gives us a true picture—it further confirms the old telephone surveyor's bromide, "If you call one—you've called them all."

Our little group is a sincere band of men and women. While others scrabble, we poll—and when we agreed to handle the subject of crooked panels, well, sir, you've never seen such enthusiasm permeating through a given group. Only once in our long career did we encounter an unfaithful person in our group and she was dismissed with dishonor. This girl was a trusted poller—until we discovered the opposite was true—she was caught in the act of discussing a subject foreign to our question of the day with a pollee (one who is called by a poller), and to us this act was the same as driving a car without a license, or smoking in a No Smoking zone, or not reporting a found glove in a public hall.

Scientific Like Anything

Now as to the question before us—"Are Panel Shows Crooked?" Here's how we divided the country sectionally so that our results would be accurate and cross-sectional. We divided the 80,000,000 people as follows:

California—	6,000,000 people	6 calls
The Solid South—	2,000,000 people	2 calls
Nevada—	20,000,000 people	*20 calls
Illinois—	2,000,000 people	2 calls
Farm Belt—	12,000,000 people	12 calls
Hagerstown, Md.—	10,000,000 people	†10 calls
The Solid East—	28,000,000 people	28 calls
	80,000,000 People	80 Calls

The results were so varied at one point that our comptometers were running far behind in totalling the results. And to further involve our findings, proprietors of gambling parlors in Nevada were rather suspicious of the question. Their general reaction was that they didn't have to fix anything in Nevada as their business was legal, and if there were crooks in the panel racket it's just too bad. A suggestion was made that all panel shows move to Nevada and they'd be declared okay, but, as pollsters, we were compelled to dismiss this suggestion as it is not our mission to participate in political shennanigans. We're pollsters—not croupiers.

The Chicken-Plucker for Instance

It would be appropriate at this point to ask ourselves—what actually constitutes a fixed panel? Is it possible for a panelist to quickly ascertain the occupation of a given chicken-plucker by simply examining said plucker's hands as is often done on "What's My Line?" The answer could very well be that this plucker, when exposing his nude hands to Dorothy Kilgallen, retained a fragment of an old chicken still stuck to the contestant's palm. In our opinion this is honest, fair and upright and anything but fixed. Certainly the owners of this package didn't attach a chicken feather to this plucker's palm to aid and abet Miss Kilgallen. If we were being polled by Dr. Nielsen or Dr. Gallup, our reply would be that Miss Kilgallen doesn't need to see a chicken feather attached to a chicken-plucker's hand to determine that the man is a chicken-plucker. But we are pollsters—not men with opinions.

Here, then, are the final results of the Manheim Poll:

California—6,000,000 people—6 calls: 4,000,000 replied that they didn't think panels were fixed; 1,500,000 thought they were; 50,000 replied, "Don't tell us that chicken plucker's feather wasn't planted."

The Solid South—1,000,000—yes; 500,000 didn't understand the question; other 500,000 said they didn't care.

Nevada—20,000,000 people—20 calls: Reply was: "We are gamblers and gamblers don't talk.

Illinois—2,000,000 people—2 calls: 1,000,000 said that panels looked kosher to them, especially the chicken-plucker with the feather attached. Remaining million watched nothing but frost warnings and "Author Meets the Critic" (which is off the air).

Farm Belt—12,000,000 people—12 calls: Majority were asleep when called. Others had no phones. This indicates a trend.

Hagerstown, Md.—10,000,000 people—10 calls: Results were disheartening to our staff.

Solid East—26,000,000 people favored panels even if fixed; other 2,000,000 suggested that panels need fixing. Interpretation of word "fix" baffled our staff as we are pollsters not interpreters.

Net Result—38,000,000—"yes"; 7,500,000—"no." Vishinsky and Farm Belt not voting.

This completes our report for 1954 and with it goes the love and devotion of an intrepid group of gypsy pollsters who gave of their time and dimes to bring this summary to you, the people of our great country. Remember, we are human pollsters—not UNIVACS.

* *Includes floating crap games populace.*
† *Something wrong here.*

'GOLD RUSH TO A GRAVEL PIT'

By BOB CHANDLER

The telefilm syndication business, which sprang up from a limited and specialized field during the FCC station freeze to what now is a rambling, scrambling competitive industry which last year did a volume of about $90,000,000 in local and regional sales alone, is beginning its fourth year as a major facet of the entertainment industry. Its effects are widely felt—by Hollywood, by stations, networks, by foreign show bizites, by agencies and sponsors large and small, by talent of all kinds, even by toy and soft-goods manufacturers whose items play a major role in the merchandising facets of the industry.

Yet, for all its size and power—already realized and still-to-be-harnessed, the syndication business is a paradox—a desert in the midst of plenty, a gold rush to a gravel pit. It's like a mining business which costs so much to extract and refine the ore that the profit just isn't there. It created, through no fault of its own, a situation where it's tough to make a buck, and it's compounded the error via an oversupply of its commodity and a thoughtless price war that threatens the future economic structure of the business.

Plain and simple fact of syndication life is two-fold: (1) Don't go into it unless you're prepared to spend a lot of money; (2) Once you are in, don't expect to get that money back for at least 18 months after the time your series is produced. The number of syndicated series that made their cost back in the first year and first run can be counted on the fingers of one hand. The profit, if there is any—and there are only a couple of outfits in the business operating at a profit—will come with the replays, and at present the market is chock full of those too.

Pricing a Basic Flaw

What's the cause of a situation that makes a bullish young industry, which under any other business conditions would find itself healthily in the black, represent a major hurdle for any experienced producer-distributor to overcome? One basic flaw is in the pricing of the product. It's too low, compared to production, distribution and other costs. What's the answer? Well, right now, it lies in a reevaluation of pricing in the medium-and lower-sized markets. To sell a series at $10 a week in a small market is folly—it costs

(Continued on page 200)

Radio-Television's New Patterns For Usefulness

By ROBERT W. SARNOFF
(Executive Vice-President, NBC)

Each January brings us not only the new year but the inevitable opportunity, courtesy of VARIETY, to take a good look through the lenses of a two-directional telescope and share our discoveries and our hopes with our colleagues in broadcasting. Of course, we seldom agree on what the telescope shows, but agreement has never been a hallmark of this business.

Bobby Sarnoff

Our NBC 'scope looks back on 1954 as the year when the word Spectacular found its way into crossword puzzles as the synonym for a new type of television show. It was the year in which more major changes were brought about in our business than ever before.

In Television, we completed our break with the past and unshackled the newer medium from the bonds of radio custom and usage. The magazine concept of programming, in which NBC under Pat Weaver has pioneered, came to the forefront as the new pattern for greater usefulness to advertisers and as an exciting program innovation for viewers. Our color Spectaculars flared across the clock-hour rigidity of audience habits to draw consistent top 10 national audiences in the Nielsens, with added impact through trade and viewer excitement.

In Radio, we forged ahead with experimentation and adaptation, seeking that enduring niche of efficiency and service which radio is destined to achieve in our communications pattern. Much remains to be done and only time and experience will lead us to the final solution. New studies conducted at NBC have brought out impressive facts concerning the power of radio to attract audiences and serve advertisers. We believe these newer facts will go a long way towards shaping the future of radio and lest there be confusion about our attitude towards radio, let me emphasize again for the record that at NBC we believe in the future of radio. Those evolutionary changes which radio is undergoing are merely symptoms of one constant effort to carve out a solid economic base for its permanent usefulness.

On all counts the year of 1954 was one of bold innovation and experiment. On the television side we at NBC sought to inject new excitement into programming, to develop new audiences, to broaden the base of advertisers by increasing the flexibility of our sales plans, and to launch color television on a national commercial basis. On the radio side, we worked to exploit radio's powerful sales potential in the light of changed conditions produced by television, and to seek out and develop certain specialized audiences that radio best reaches.

Of all the things we can say about 1955 there is one that must be said 1955 will be the year of color television. December, 1954, was as VARIETY itself predicted last Summer in appraising NBC's persistent eagerness for color, a blaze of color. Three of the four major networks offered color programs. The listings of color television programs in the newspapers became almost a daily practice. The public began developing an appetite for color.

There are many predictions and estimates of color set circulation for 1955 but the only safe prediction is that, in color as in black and white, set circulation will probably outstrip all predictions—barring, of course, unpredictable occurrences in the industry or our national life.

On the basis of our past experience, our course at NBC will continue ahead in magazine concept programming. The successes of "Today," "Home" and "Tonight" provide us with guideposts. Together they now constitute one-third of our network programming on week-days. They have made national exposure available to a broader base of advertisers than ever before. We ended 1954 with a total of 210 national advertisers and our sights for 1955 are set considerably higher. What other medium offers so wide a range of uses for budgets of $6,000 to $6,000,000?

The Color Era

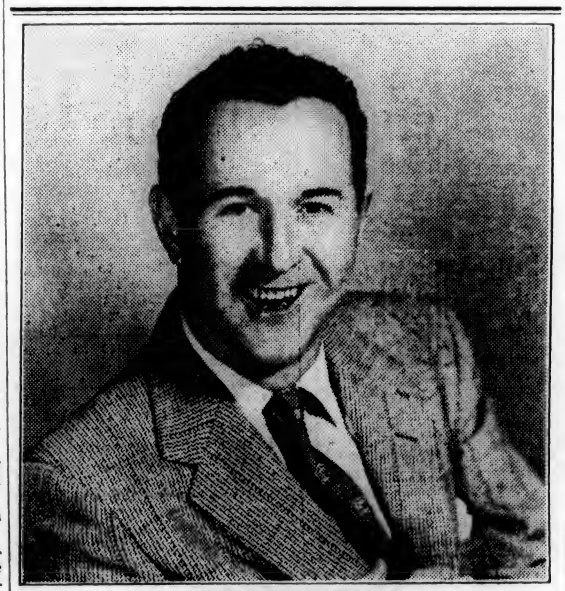
The era of color television became a reality as a national service last fall with the launching of the NBC Spectaculars. These new-style productions made the biggest programming news of the year, and became a major element in NBC's new selling look. For advertisers looking for prestige, leadership and dealer excitement, Spectaculars were the answer.

The importance of the Spectaculars to advertisers must be measured not only in terms of top 10 Nielsen audiences — which these shows attract — but in terms of impact. The impact of commercials on these Spectaculars is undeniably great. And it is this tremendous impact, added to the large audiences, which are part of the new pattern of usefulness.

On the radio side, 1955 will see the effects of studies NBC has just completed on the present potential of this medium. These studies have brought out impressive facts regarding the power of radio to attract audiences and sell goods.

In the field of daytime radio our latest research reemphasizes the primary position of this medium for reaching and selling women everywhere. During an average weekday, almost 70,000,000 people listen to daytime radio. More than half of this audience is recruited from television households. Daytime radio's low cost and high productivity assure its continuation as a basic advertising medium in the years ahead.

In nighttime radio, material developed from a national probability sample show that more than 56,250,000 people listen to evening radio on any average evening. While this nighttime figure is impressively large, the trend will be toward emphasizing the use of evening radio as a complementary medium.



BOB RUSSELL
SEALTEST BARKER 'BIG TOP', CBS-TV
MISS UNIVERSE PAGEANT, Long Beach, Calif.
MISS AMERICA PAGEANT, Atlantic City, N. J.

One Who Loved Radio For Its Own Sake

A Requiem To a Studio; Engineer With Big Ideas

By ROBERT J. LANDRY

Much mythology has grown up around the old Columbia Workshop, which wasn't a workshop at all, nor a special studio, nor a special staff. Mostly the Columbia Workshop was a state of mind possible in one organization at one point in time. There had been earlier "experimental" series at CBS, the also-ran network of those days which were always eager to do with brains what NBC did with dollars—namely, build prestige. More immediately the Columbia Workshop came into being because a studio engineer, Irving Reis, kept nagging the program vice-president, William B. Lewis, to give him a chance to demonstrate the things of which radio was capable.

Even today it's impossible to get a balanced evaluation of Irving Reis. His energy and persistence are generally conceded. That he was an eager beaver is surely evident. But from there onward, the jury of his contemporaries of 1936 and 1937 violently disagree. Some declare that young Reis was a compulsive showoff with a flair for making fairly ordinary technical tricks seem extraordinary and precedental. That he dramatized himself at CBS is on the record. How else could he bridge the gap between studio control engineer and program producer? He was not the first, nor the last, at CBS to make loud noises on his own trumpet. If he was guilty, as those who dissent from the Reis legend argue, of the presumption of thinking himself an artist, he was also guilty of the corollary presumption of suggesting to the management of a network that radio was an art and not just a dodge.

Minimally Reis demonstrated a lively mind, a wide-ranging imagination and a zest for things new. He was a million light-years ahead of the slick youths in the Madison Avenue huckster shops who go through program-planning sessions at a collected trot, never moving.

Living Up (or Down) a Myth

The thing that was remarkable about the Columbia Workshop was its willingness to embrace the bizarre, the esoteric, the poetic, the improbable. But it is sheer myth-making to suggest it was undilute genius. A careful researching of old Workshop scripts and a diligent hearing of old recordings debunks that posture. Often enough the CBS publicity department mimeograph machines turned out hotter copy about the Workshop than the Workshop itself managed to get on the air. CBS was never an organization to use bashful prose in its handouts.

Partly because many of the Workshop effusions were so downright silly some of the oldtimers in the CBS program bullpen resented the acclaim accorded Irving Reis and held that justice had miscarried. Their candidate for glory was Charley Tazewell, undoubtedly an authentic innovator. Young Reis had been the studio engineer for the program Tazewell wrote and directed based on Poe's "Tell-tale Heart" and originating, a great novelty in its time, from the Poe cottage in the Bronx. Tazewell had employed a medical stethoscope effect to render a magnified heart-beat of a man driven to the brink of insanity.

CBS executives were perhaps not prone to worry who was first or best among their underpaid staff geniuses in those depression years. They were admittedly impressed that Reis, an engineer, wrote a radio script upon which the highbrow radio critic of the New York Post, Aaron Stein, lavished ecstatic praise. CBS was willing to be ecstatically praised in the press every time and part of the subsequent delight of management with the Columbia Workshop was its capacity to evoke precious salutes to the also-ran network in arty and intellectual circles.

Somehow Irving Reis had gotten to Europe and been keyed up by program experiments going on in Britain and Germany. Returning to New York, he talked up his Workshop dream. In those days it was a cinch to get into the presence of a network official. Everybody was pretty humble. It didn't really surprise anybody that a staff engineer fancied himself a writer on the side and, prospectively, a director. Such staff writers as Charley Tazewell, Charley Speer, Georgia Backus and Yolanda Langworthy were directors, too, if need be. In depression years radio's very page boys, secretaries and lower executives were glad to cop some bucks in the studio. One chap, Harry Swann, was CBS' entire sound effects squad, but also contributed some 12 dialects. The original CBS program boss, Julius Seebach, often came to the bullpen in the morning with a few scribblings on the back of an envelope. With these for memorandum and synopsis, Seebach would dictate to a secretary a completely developed script with dialog right off the top of his head.

The Lovely Vigil

Reis had started at CBS doing the dullest job of all, standby log engineer at master control. Federal regulations, a relic of the Titanic disaster, still required constant "watch" on the 600 meter band for distress signals at sea. A lonelier vigil could scarcely be imagined and most engineers developed what is known as an "engineer's ear," hearing only line breakdowns or SOS's. Otherwise they read, or dozed, or thought about blondes. Irving Reis was unique. He listened to the programs. He became a radio critic.

His first chance to engineer an actual dramatic program came on a fluke. The assigned engineer, who was a diabetic, blacked out just as the show was about to go on the air. Dispatched as the only available man, Reis' supervisor shouted a parting word of advice, "Don't touch a thing! Leave the dials the way you find them!"

As a reward for touching nothing, Reis was transferred to the program studios and away from remote master control. He now watched actors act and directors direct. He was enthusiastic and cooperative and he ended on "The March of Time," then one of the most technically progressive programs on the air.

The best information suggests that the Columbia Workshop was originally intended only as a short-ride summer filler during the dog days of 1936. The original budget of the Workshop was only $400 a week. Never, but never, did a radio network buy itself so much prestige for so little cash outlay. There were none, including Reis, who foresaw the floods of publicity, the magazine articles, the excitement in the English departments of the colleges that was to follow.

Maker of Dreams

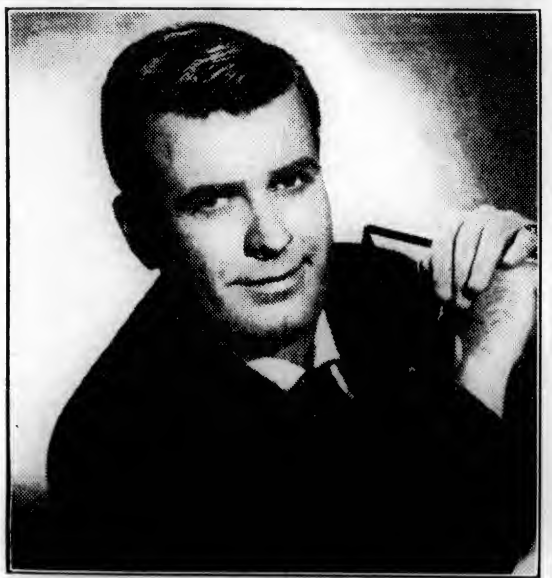
Reis himself was to run the gamut from high elation to disillusionment, from quick fame in radio to ultimate "exile" in Hollywood films. Reis began quite soon to feud with CBS management. His dream went further, much further, than the CBS bigwigs would go. He wanted nothing less than a full-scale and fully-staffed "test laboratory" for the development of new program ideas. He argued that all modern industries made large financial provision for growth and diversification. Too often it seemed to Reis that the top brass at CBS cared chiefly for the wonderful press notices.

Actually the first Workshop broadcast of July 18, 1936, was more embarrassment than triumph. It was in two parts. First, "A Comedy of Danger" by Richard Hughes had the actors on a chalked circle, reading from script. Second, "The Finger of God," by Percival Wilde, had the actors roaming the studio, working the props, their lines committed to memory. Just what Irving Reis was trying to prove that night was never clear. Results were much better the second week with "Broadway Evening," an adventure in Manhattan street noises.

Sound itself fascinated Reis. "We don't really know yet what our microphones can do. We're going to put them in queer places, add new inventions, give them their heads, and see what happens. We want to break every rule (sic) known to radio broadcasting."

Reis "demonstrated" electrical fever machines, fog-eye, X-ray. "Ideas tumble out of this amazing fellow," the CBS mimeograph shouted. He offered a discussion of musical instruments. He lectured on how to get the best reception in your home. Brad Bar-

(Continued on page 110)



STEVE DUNNE
Starring in
"Professional Father"
Starting on CBS-Television
Saturday Jan. 8th, 10 P.M.—EST

Who Needs New Haven?

By SIDNEY LUMET

Some show business savant—could have been Goodman Ace or somebody like that—recently insisted that what tv needs is a tryout setup designed to give a new series a chance to assemble its material properly, stress its strongest assets, and open in the best possible shape. "There is no New Haven in tv," the man said.

This special piece will try to prove the man is wrong. Perhaps it can be done by taking the series, "You Are There," as an example. I was lucky enough to direct the show for two years and we started to make our changes 20 minutes after our first program, "The Hindenburg Crash," was exposed to a national Sunday audience. Who needed New Haven?

On the theory that it takes at least a month for a series to shake itself down and settle into a proper groove, we chipped away until we felt it was right. For example, we debated whether it was effective showmanship to show the commentator, Walter Cronkite, on camera. Wasn't it destroying a mood, we argued, to dramatize The Death of Socrates and pan from time to time to an impeccable announcer in a Brooks Bros. charcoal gray? And putting a custom-fitted toga on him would have been even more ludicrous. We settled it, therefore, by having the actors in our dramas answer off-camera questions by talking directly into the lenses, shot real tight. The new technique was used on a succeeding show, "The Boston Tea Party," and it worked fine.

Wiping Cronkite off the screen after his appearance at the very start of the shows was another problem. We tried normal dissolves, straight wipes, even compressing him into a corner of the screen. All turned out unsatisfactorily. Finally, we hit upon the box technique wherein Cronkite's likeness receded into the distance and the dramatic event itself took possession of the screen.

The Sneak-Up Technique

Again, working without benefit of New Haven or the Shubert theatre in Philly, we discovered that there would have to be changes in our story-telling technique. On the Hindenburg episode, we tried sneaking up on our subject. We had the program go to Lakehurst to talk to personnel there, we inserted segments involving announcers giving weather reports, etc. Our first view of the ill-fated ship itself was some 13 minutes after the show had started. We found out this technique was faulty. We hadn't too much time to tell our story and we had to cut extraneous buildup and get to it quickly.

Without the benefit of an out-of-town opening, we discovered "You Are There" would have to sacrifice subtleties of characterization in favor of acting that would have to be done in quick stabs and thrusts. We only had 24 minutes for the story and so if we were doing something on Napoleon, it seemed better to cast a lesser known actor in the lead role rather than a Brando or a Maurice Evans or a Charles Boyer. The latter trio have enriched the screen and stage with Napoleon portrayals but they did it in movies and plays that ran two hours and more. We were working in a medium where seconds are important and we just had no time for characterization done with loving care.

All of these readjustments came following our first program, after the series had enjoyed its official opening. We had no chance to tinker with our show backstage at the Shubert in New Haven or in a suite at the Taft Hotel next door. But "You Are There" turned out fine because the critics and national audiences permitted us the luxury of post-opening corrections.

Since most VARIETY annual pieces contain some philosophical advice, I guess my own would be aimed at tv directors: Don't stay with one thing too long.

I am freelancing now by my own inclination, I am happy to say. I remember a line of Max Liebman's once when he was told a certain critic insisted the Caesar-Coca show was getting a little "tired." Said Max quietly: "I understand how he feels. But it isn't the show that's getting tired—it's he. He's been watching too steadily with critical eyes. If he skipped us a week or two, he'd enjoy us more when he got back."

Max's point has some relevance here. I think any tv director staying with one show long enough will get stale because of it. Doing the same thing week after week is stultifying. Let's consider the whole thing in terms of simple arithmetic. Suppose I do 44 "Danger" programs a season. A Hollywood movie runs about three times as long as a "Danger" half-hour. That would mean I am directing the equivalent of 13 Hollywood movies a year. Have you ever heard of George Stevens or William Wyler or Kazan doing 13 films a year? These days, a major studio combining all its resources has a hard time making much more than that.

That about does it except I'd like to mention that the nicest Xmas present Jack Van Volkenburg or Pat Weaver can give tv directors next year is to work out the time schedules and broadcasting economics so all television adaptations run 90 minutes instead of 60. The clock is our greatest enemy and cutting good scripts down to the bone so they fit a time slot is the most depressing activity in the schedule of a tv director. If we could eliminate this chore, that New Haven alibi would become even more ridiculous.

ED HERLIHY
NBC

Exhibitors Beginning To See The TV Light

By ELIOT HYMAN
(Pres., Associated Artists Productions)

The feature motion picture has become one of the most important assets of television. Only a short time ago it was the stepchild of the video waves; today it has taken a position of prominence along with the best in tv entertainment; in the not too distant future feature films may even be the good strong backbone of the whole industry. There is no doubt in my own mind that the trend is in this direction.

A lot of prejudice has had to be overcome. And a lot more still has to be overcome. I mean the prejudice on the part of theatrical exhibitors against anything that has even the remotest connection with television. There was a time when television was a 10-letter word that just wasn't mentioned in polite movie theatre society.

But more and more, exhibitors have begun to realize that profitable cooperation between the tv station and the movie theatre is not only possible, but actually workable. Whatever hostility there was between the two—and no one will seriously deny that there was a good deal of it at times—has now largely leveled off. More and more of us are seeing that the two fields of entertainment cannot only exist side by side, but can supplement and enrich each other.

When, a short time ago, we announced the establishment of Associated Artists Productions for the distribution of feature pictures for both theatrical and tv outlets, we were motivated strongly by the belief that with proper handling we would overcome whatever conflict still remains. We are all in the entertainment industry. We are all good enough showmen, I hope, to realize that the public will seek out the best entertainment, wherever it happens to be. And because of this, it is the plan of AAP to provide as much of this entertainment as we possibly can, in whatever medium would be most beneficial to all concerned, and with only the soundest of business principles as the basis.

Generally speaking, a feature film needs a period of less than two years to derive its full revenue from theatre exhibition. The smart exhibitors have presumably, by that time, got out of the picture every theatrical nickel that could be squeezed out of it. To expect a feature picture, at this point, to be locked up in vaults and to disappear from the market, is nothing more nor less than sheer waste of film, with all the money, talent and work that have gone into it. It is, to put it bluntly, an arbitrary attitude, which holds that, "I can no longer use the picture in my theatre, but just the same I don't want you to show it on tv."

It may also be said—and believe it or not, it has been said—that movie theatre patrons will not pay to see a picture that they will eventually be getting on television. I would just like to ask those who make this claim—in all frankness and honesty, how many patrons will refuse to go see a picture in the theatre simply because in two years it will be on tv! It is safe to say that they don't even give it a thought.

Associated Artists Productions will do its share in supplying the film requirements of both theatres and television. There will be problems—no doubt about that. But there has never been a problem yet that men of good will have not been able to solve together.

Comes The Revolution In Telefilms

By MICHAEL M. SILLERMAN
(Exec V.P., TPA)

No one goes into business to be small.

Everyone in the television film business wants to be General Motors, U. S. Steel.

A few of us will. But most of those that survive the next year or two will stay small. And here's the reason: You walk into the office of any television station manager and tell him you want to buy a half-hour television film show. Does he have any for sale? Does he *have* any? He'll have upward of 40!

All those programs lying around unsold, and for one simple reason. Many of them were made cheap and they look it. There's a quiet revolution going on in television films right now, something like this: television film must be network-quality, whether it is going on a network or whether it is going to be syndicated, because the distributor must be versatile enough to sell either to network or local.

And those companies which produce quality shows will be big, the rest will struggle.

The revolution also extends to local advertisers, we find. They are happy to do business with a company that produces films like "The Halls of Ivy" and "Lassie" which are sold to big national advertisers and carried on national networks, because it's like buying a car from General Motors or a bridge from U. S. Steel.

Our account men call on advertisers who have seen "Ivy" and "Lassie" and acceptance has been created. These advertisers may never have met our account man but they feel they know his company. Is this bad?

The small town advertiser until now has had to buy his television shows from companies which turned them out like sausages. But no one ever built a bridge with hot dogs.

This is not brave talk intended to impress anyone. This is what we know, based on TPA's first year which has made industry history. We have proved that the foundation we built TPA on was sound: network quality programs for either network or local sale. The local advertisers love it.

As a matter of fact, the local sponsors aren't alone. Marching along with them are the critics and the broadcasters who have long claimed that there was nothing wrong with television film that quality and showmanship wouldn't change.

Maybe I'm a little premature. Maybe there'll be room in television for the mediocre.

Maybe it is too early to bury the hacks and the tired private eyes and their matronly inamoratas, and maybe television films can be the last refuge of familiar but tired entertainers.

But the *big* business will be done by companies which make top shows—comprising freshness, quality and showmanship.

Trendex Is Going Up to 15 Cities

Trendex is increasing its 10-city measurement by 50% with five markets to join the overnight scoreboard beginning Feb. 1. The additions are Dallas-Fort Worth, Denver, Kansas City, Minneapolis-St. Paul and Nashville. The rating outfit will thus be going into the southwest and west of Chicago for the first time.

The five new Trendex areas are all on the interconnected networks equipped to handle the live shows of all the webs, with the usual set-up of minimum three stations per city. (The 10-city skein originated in 1951, consists of New York, Philly, Baltimore, Washington, Atlanta, Cincy, Cleveland, Columbus, Detroit and Chicago.)

Some trade observers figure Trendex stepped up its coverage because of continuing complaints from NBC that the 10-city measurement was inadequate from the point of view of the web's color spectaculars. The specolas have been faring poorly on Trendex, with Nielsen, on the other hand, listing most of them in the Top 10.

. . . A Producer's True Reward

By IRVING GITLIN
(CBS Director of Public Affairs and Producer of 'The Search')

I don't imagine the lot of the producer has changed much since the days of the ancient Greek dramatists. Certianly, the routine of putting everything you've got in the way of blood, sweat, tears and dollars into a production, and then waiting with heart in mouth for the reaction of the rest of the world is as old as the theatre. The whole cycle is wearily familiar to all who produce shows for the general entertainment and edification of the electrorate.

But when your medium is fast-moving television, and your show has been in preparation for two years, and the number of man-hours and dollars expanded is no less than frightening, a producer's interest in this general reaction is, understandably, greater than usual. So when the reaction is that generated by the first few "The Search" programs, why, suddenly the grass is greener, birds sing far more sweetly and most certainly, "God's in His Heaven, and all's right with the world."

In its 26 programs, "The Search" will have dealt, intimately, with 26 completely different fields of human endeavor — each represented by a research project at a different university — each big enough and important enough to justify a full series. Accordingly, the program decisions we have been required to make have been numerous, difficult, and cruel. Have we, in our treatment, obliterated the essential humanness of the research going on in our universities? Have we been too technical? Too un-technical? Can we, after all, combine human emotional values and intellectual information without sacrificing high professional standards of showmanship?

The most tormenting doubt of all, frankly, was whether anyone would recognize or acknowledge the new ideas we were attempting to incorporate in "The Search." Would our audience "get" what we were trying to do? If not, all had been wasted, and the teaching profession would probably soon regain a long-departed member.

Of the three groups who comprise the audience—the press, the public, and the experts—the first to comment was, naturally, the press.

In a somewhat opinionated review of the first broadcast of "The Search," a rather widely-read trade publication called VARIETY gave the first tipoff that perhaps our doubts and fears were injustified. This publication called the program "both intellectual and human . . a rare combination to achieve . . one of the most absorbing half-hours the network has aired," and, in frankly congratulatory tones announced that the network had—with this one series—"opened new frontiers for television as a medium of information and instruction."

The critics in the consumer press—undoubtedly using golden typewriters—added their powerful and heartening "Bravo!" The N. Y. Tribune's John Crosby, certainly not a gushy type of critic, called "The Search" . . absolutely fascinating . . a formidable and noble undertaking" and concluded that it was "just about the best thing of this kind ever seen on television."

'An Exciting Experience'

Jack Gould, in the N. Y. Times, promptly called it "a rewarding and exciting experience in viewing," analyzed it succinctly as "intelligent showmanship," and pointed out that "from the standpoint of education, "The Search" should come as a particularly stimulating event.

Sid Shalit, of the N. Y. Daily News, advised his readers that "The Search," "produced with candor, simplicity, and sincere devotion to detail," was "good news for the millions of viewers in search of discriminating television fare."

The two Philips on those slick-paper barometers of metropolitan entertainment currents, Cue and New Yorker, responded to the program's debut with "among the most enlightening picture-essays in television . . . only fault is that a half-hour is not nearly long enough," Minoff, of Cue, and "Fascinating . . . presented with dignity and intelligence," Hamburger, New Yorker.

So much for our fears about how the press would react to that of which we at CBS Television were so proud.

The enthusiasm with which all divisions of the viewing public—fans, experts, educational and civic groups, etc.—have received the "Search" broadcasts, exceeds anything in my experience in the industry. Letters have been pouring in steadily, from Governors and high national officials of the Federal Government and from schoolteachers in one-room school-houses, full of approval, encouragement, offers of cooperation and requests to use the films of the program in further educational efforts.

A recent broadcast was shot entirely inside San Quentin prison, to illustrate the work of the U. of California's Department of Criminology. Official reactions included "compliment you on the excellent television presentation . . . One of the best of its kind . . most heartening and encouraging," E. R. Cass, General Secretary, American Prison Association; "want you to know how much those of us in the correctional field appreciated the very fine film . . one of the best such films yet shown . . join with others continue to bring to the public additional films," Roberts J. Wright, President, National Jail Association; and ". . . had the great merit of being informative and factual should help awaken the American public to the need for reform a true to life pictures," James C. Bennett, Director, Bureau of Prisons, United States Department of Justice.

The felicitous deluge started with our first broadcast, based on the fine work being done to eliminate stuttering at Dr. Wendell Johnson's famous Speech Clinic at the U. of Iowa. Iowa's late governor, William S. Beardsley, wired his heartiest congratulations to CBS Television's President, J. L. Van Volkenburg. Virgil M. Hancher, President of the State U. of Iowa, wired Frank Stanton, President of the Columbia Broadcasting System, just after watching the first broadcast, "Congratulations for this superb effort and excellent result in interpreting . . . this complex human research problem with accuracy, dramatic warmth and understanding."

Other speech and hearing agencies were just as quick to note their approval. The American Speech and Hearing Association encouraged us with, "CBS is to be congratulated on its vision and sense of public service the program was thoroughly sound professionally, particularly helpful . made a real contribution," M. D. Steer, Director of Purdue's Speech and Hearing Clinic, called the program an "excellent public service feature . I am pleased to report that the coverage was adequate, accurate and authentic effectively instructional and authentically portrayed." Dean E. Williams, Assistant Professor of Speech at Indiana U., " want to commend you on the first program in "The Search" series . . very clear , very effective . congratulations to you and your staff and to Wendell Johnson."

From University Deans and Chancellors and Presidents and from State Governors and Federal agencies all over the land, the letters have kept coming in, all of them conveying sentiments similar to those expressed by John W. Vanderwilt, President of the Colorado School of Mines: "Through The Search," CBS Television is bringing to the people of our nation broad knowledge of a widely varied nature. With this fine series, it is helping to raise the intellectual standards of the country—to make the United States an even better place in which to live. Such a series is the use of television in the best possible manner—it is a substantial justification of the medium against its harshest critics."

These are fan letters, all right, but from fans who probably never wrote such a letter before. And the letters do not stop with praise or congratulations. More than half these letters contain offers of promotion and cooperation. Every university Alumni Association has been quick and eager to alert its entire membership to "The Search" broadcasts. They write about the series in their bulletins and journals and monthly letters. Traffic Safety, and Highway Improvement Agencies of automobile manufacturers and insurance companies were quick to bulletinize hundreds and thousands of key personnel around the country to watch the broadcast based on Cornell U.'s Auto Crash Injury Research. The series has been a promotion publicity man's paradise. Every University insists on the opportunity of putting out stories on our programs through its entire state.

Experience with special screenings in the first month of the series shows that this, too, will prove to be a most satisfactory method of getting critical exposure for "The Search" programs. More than 1,200 delegates to the annual Congress of Correction of the American Prison Association saw and applauded the San Quentin film. The nation's leaders in the field of vehicular design and traffic engineering, attending the 1954 "Conference for Safer Living," welcomed the Cornell film. The Cornell film was also shown to the 1954 Clinical Congress of the American College of Surgeons last month in Atlantic City, and meshed perfectly with one of their key themes "Our Fashionable Killer—the Automobile." A preview

(Continued on page 201)

BESS MYERSON
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From Dark To Daylight— The Path of Syndicated Film

By GEORGE SHUPERT
(Pres., ABC Film Syndication)

Remember the poem which starts, "I have a little shadow which goes everywhere with me . . . " The growth of television is as closely tied to the growth of the syndicated film industry, but the latter has substantially more substance than a shadow.

I term the syndicated film business as "the shadow" because it is quick to adapt for its own use the programs or formats which have proven themselves on networks or in local live programming.

The rise of the syndicated half-hour western and mystery show was a direct result of the popularity of feature westerns and live network mysteries. Situation comedy, tried and proven successful as network fare, soon found its way into syndication, along with sports, children shows and others.

A typical example of a successful "shadow" is our "Racket Squad" series. Originally produced for network airing from 1951 to 1953, this series, in syndication, has equalled or topped its network record in over 100 markets in the past year, in spite of the fact that the series is second or third run in many of these markets.

It is quite apparent that film syndicators are keeping a sharp eye on tv's newest field of development, daytime television, and will be ready with suitable product when the market is ready.

The first indication that we at ABC Film Syndication had that a half-hour syndicated film show (not of the kid variety) would become an integral part of daytime television was in February of this year when Safeway Stores bought "The Playhouse" for weekday afternoon telecasts in two markets. According to our information, prior to that the only film shows on weekday schedules were feature films or kid shows, so we claimed a "first" for "The Playhouse."

From the standpoint of program content and quality, this was an excellent buy for the advertiser. "The Playhouse" is an anthology dramatic series containing stories of romance, human interest, mystery, suspense, comedy and other elements which are contained in the popular soap operas which have entertained the American housewife for so many years. (I'll have more to say about soap operas later.)

No Trends Yet

During the past spring we did an intensive study on the use of syndicated film shows in daytime television. We selected 19 markets in various parts of the country as the basis of the study and examined the individual station schedule. Here's what we found:

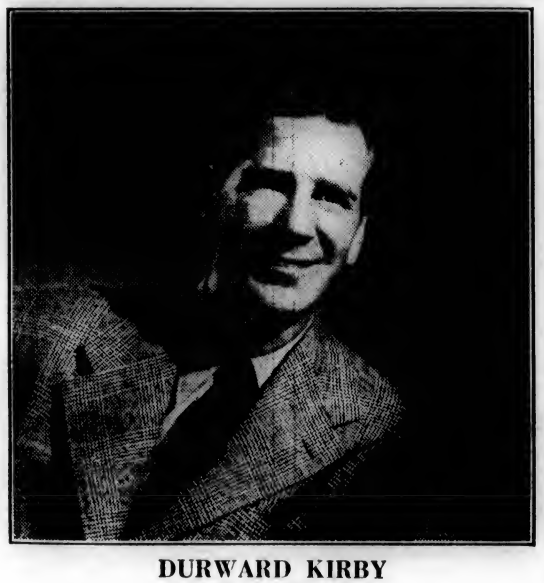
From signon to 7 p.m. syndicated films were used mostly on Saturdays and Sundays, both mornings and afternoons. Weekdays, syndicated films were generally programmed in the 5:30 to 7 p.m. time slots and these were mainly geared to the juvenile audience. Adult dramatic series were programmed weekday afternoons on about a half-dozen stations in the 19 markets which have a combined total of 56 stations that operate 12 or more hours daily.

What our study most clearly indicated was that there were few conclusions which could be drawn about daytime use of syndicated film. There was no correlation between the total number of program hours and the number of film hours. There were no trends, by geographical definition, nor by the number of stations in any given market. In fact, there was a great variance in the number of syndicated film programs scheduled by individual stations in multi-station markets.

If, however, this survey is repeated six months from now, I believe there will be a sizeable increase in the use of syndicated film shows during the day. This will be due to several factors: the growing emphasis on daytime television; expanding station schedules and the need to provide quality programming comparable to evening fare; the difficulty which new advertisers may have in securing evening time periods in many markets; the availability of high-calibre film shows which have run several times in evening slots and will be priced to daytime rates; and finally, the snowballing popularity of network daytime television programs, both the how-to features and soap operas. As I mentioned before, whatever is successful on network seems sure to be developed in syndication.

Speaking of soap operas, of course, brings us to the point where we must consider their role in the future of syndicated films. I feel confident that within the next year most of the major film syndicators will have acquired several daytime programs, at least one of which will probably be a soap opera. We here at ABC Film Syndication have for the past several months talked to many producers on the subject of daytime tv. We are, in fact, negotiating for programs to be produced in half-hour or 15-minute segments for cross the board programming. One will be a tv version of a popular daytime romance and the other will be a soap opera written by one of the foremost writers in the field.

We anticipate being able to offer one or both of these series in the spring and will be able to offer to our customers production which retains all of the quality of live network productions and yet will be sold at locally-acceptable prices.



DURWARD KIRBY
GARRY MOORE SHOW
JUSTICE
GOODYEAR TELEVISION PLAYHOUSE

MEL BLANC
"Jack Benny Show"—TV
TV "Musical Chairs"—KTTV
Radio
"Jack Benny Show" "Cisco Kid"
CBS-Network Mutual Network

WOV to Produce Italo TV Shows, Inks With WATV

WOV, the Ralph Weil-Arnold Hartley-managed bilingual indie in New York, is going into television. Not with its own station, as it originally contemplated doing, but in establishing a stake in video programming.

WOV has just concluded negotiations with WATV in Newark, N. J., whereby the Gotham indie will take over Saturday and Sunday night chunks of time for its own Italian programming. It'll be both live and film, with production of pix subjects (mostly of a human interest and travelog nature) already under way in Rome. (Station for some years has been producing its own radio shows in Italy). Tied in with the WOV-WATV venture also will be the Fortune Pope enterprises (WHOM, Il Progresso daily).

Kickoff date for the WOV Italian programming is Jan. 16, with both live and film segments. Eventually the Weil-Hartley combine will take over Sundays 7 to 9 p.m. and Saturdays 7 to 8 for its WATV programming, with WOV also negotiating for sponsors among its own list of Italian clients.

'Tinker' Tinkles, Hits Rating Bell

WABC-TV, the ABC flagship in New York, appears to have solved some early morning rating problems even though the nighttime rating situation still presents a headache to the station. Big rating boost comes in the form of a sleeper, a local kiddie show in the pre-"Breakfast Club" 8 to 9 a.m. crossboard slotting.

Show is "Tinker's Workshop," which strictly as a juve entry, has been tying and even outrating the CBS-TV "Morning Show" (via WCBS-TV) and proving a close second to NBC's "Today" on WRCA-TV. Five-day average for the kid-entry in the 8 a.m. quarter-hour, according to the Dec. 1-7 ARB figures, is 1.5, while the 8:15 quarter-hour average is 1.9, equal to that of the "Morning Show" and not too far behind "Today's" 2.7. Rating for 8:30 is 2.1, with "Morning" only a 1.6 and "Today" a 2.7. Show is tied with "Morning" in the final quarter-hour with a 1.9, while "Today" registers a 2.8. Day-by-day, "Tinker" tied "Today" in two time slots, the Wednesday and Tursday 8:30 segments, with a 2.6, easily outranking "Morning."

Topper to the show's success is the fact that it was on only four weeks at the time the ratings were taken. Show is emceed by Bob Keeshan, a former Clarabel of "Howdy Doody" and presently doubling as the station's noontime "Corny the Clown." He plays a Swiss toymaker who shows the kiddies how to make and play with toys, interspersing with this a few cartoons and children's records.

Good Music Goes 'Big Time'

By ELLIOTT M. SANGER
(Executive Vice-Pres., WQXR, N. Y.)

One of the problems in writing about the future is that you have to think about it in terms of the past. So when I sit down to write something about WQXR going to 50,000 watts in 1955, I cannot help but think about WQXR as a 250-watt section when we started out almost 20 years ago.

Back in 1936, the idea of broadcasting good music was revolutionary, in fact it was foolhardy. All the experienced people in radio told us that it could not be done and that we would not last six months—and they were almost right. There were many pay days when John Hogan and I, who owned the station then, did not know how we were going to scrape together enough money to run the next week. Somehow we always managed.

The thing that the experts did not know, and which we only surmised at that time, was the great dormant demand for good music which was not being satisfied. Remember, that was the time when record sales of good music were in the doldrums; when listening to good music was considered a "highbrow" hobby; when high-fidelity was something in the laboratory and when going to Carnegie Hall or the "Met" was regarded as something for the rich and not for the mutitude.

It was understandable that the broadcast experts discouraged us, but what really hurt was the reluctance of the advertiser and ageney to put up their money to prove we were on the right track. It took time and it took years of pioneering and promotion to prove that the audience for WQXR was growing and that those listeners were just as responsive to advertising as listeners to other stations. A few venturesome sponsors came along as the years went on and they found out that this was a new form of radio and one which could be used profitably even on a "cost-per-thousand" basis.

What has happened since 1936? Lots of things including a World War, a cold war and an age of anxiety, all of which may have contributed to an increasing enjoyment of the best in music. That is probably the most striking cultural change in the American people in the past generation. Statisticians even go so far as to prove that more Americans pay admission to musical events than attend baseball games. And this is not something that has happened only around New York and other large cities—it is true in almost every part of this country.

Longhair Now Popular

Most important, this cultural change has taken good music out of the longhair class. It happened because WQXR and other good music stations, the important network musical programs such as the New York Philharmonic on CBS, the NBC Symphony heard over NBC until last year, the Telephone Hour, plus the greatly increased sale of classical music records, have exposed millions of people to good music. The reaction of many of them was "This isn't so tough to take," and they began to like it. Many of them found that classical music gave them something which no other music could, and that it was no longer something exclusively for the highbrows. They even found out that you could like jazz music, or pop tunes by Rodgers and Kern, and still enjoy Beethoven and Brahms. Exposure is making the audience for the best in music grow at a very rapid pace. I do not mean to suggest that the Philharmonic will be more popular than Stan Kenton. The trend is for more and more people to like more and more kinds of music, including the best.

In the New York metropolitan area which WQXR has served for so many years the concentration of music lovers is greatest and that accounts for the fact that more than 600,000 homes listen regularly to the music and The New York Times news broadcast by our station. That is more than all the radio homes in some of our biggest cities such as Boston, Washington, Baltimore, Cleveland, or San Francisco.

To make WQXR programs available to many more thousands we are now building a top-powered 50 kilowatt transmitter which will be on the air, we hope, before 1955 is many months old. This will be the first classical music and news station in the United States to operate at the maximum power permitted by the F.C.C. This important (and expensive) step is being taken by WQXR because its parent, The New York Times, has confidence in the future of radio especially when it is specialized in the format which we have developed. We have found out that the demand for good music and news is not in competition with television. If you really love music you want to listen to it, not see it. For straight, factual news hot off the wires, nothing beats "every hour on the hour."

With 50 kilowatts we will be extending our service area mightily and with the growth of the population in the suburbs, WQXR will be broadcasting the music of the great composers into thousands of more homes in the city and in nearby states where people seem to want more and more of it. That is what we believe and we hope we are just as good guessers now as we were back in 1936.

NELSON CASE

I Am NOT A Camera—But

By ROBERT MULLIGAN
(TV Director)

I like television and I love its cameras. I enjoy watching tv. I love working in it and I am proud to be connected with it. I am one of those fortunate individuals who has grown up with this new entertainment medium and feels we are maturing together. It has been an exciting time so far and it will become even more exciting. I can recognize its faults, its shortcomings, its failures, and still recognize its greatness. I have witnessed most of the rich and wonderful moments in television's short history. It has been, at times, powerful and moving. It has done courageous, stimulating work and each year we find it expanding, finding itself stronger and more daring. It is in its very youth, in its energy that we find it emerging as a new art form.

As one of the directors in this medium, my views are particular. As someone who is proud to be associated with it, my opinions are rather vehement. I will not defend television here. Since I make my living from it my defense would not be generally accepted. Besides, I feel it does not require a defense. When television is good, when it fulfills its purpose, it speaks for itself. When it does not, when it fails, a defense is foolhardy. An argument with the detractors of the medium must fall in the realm of wasted effort.

My argument is with those responsible people in the business who fail to use the tools of our trade to further the progress of television. In the area of tv drama especially, this failing is most apparent. It is on this level that we must see ourselves honestly, and appraise our work in the light of what this new medium demands. The general misuse of the television camera in our dramas is appalling. Even more distressing is the lack of concern over this failing. Perhaps, as a director, my attitude regarding this problem is magnified and oversensitive. I think not. A television director is a new animal in the complex entertainment world. He works with the familiar elements of script and cast and his responsibility for telling the story is no different from that of the theatre or motion picture director. He differs only in that he must use the television camera to bring his play to an audience. It is a remarkably big difference. Several motion picture and theatre directors have discovered this in attempting to bring their specialized talent and training into television. They realized quickly that in that one phase, the use of the tv camera, they were not prepared. Some took the time and trouble to learn and are now using the camera to add the power and meaning to the dramas that it should. Others returned happily to their own fields while some have remained, having made a partial adjustment and can contribute only a percentage of what they should. They work and produce in a crippled state unable or unwilling to develop a facility with the one instrument that can make and, when used properly, has made the tv drama a new and exciting piece of entertainment.

TV Not Conglomerate

It is by comparison with the superior, well-photographed, visually sensitive productions that these badly handled shows display their lack of knowledge, imagination and courage. This failure becomes even more pronounced in the hands of those directors whose sole training has been in television and who should know their trade. The camera is no stranger to them. They have not been as conditioned by other forms as the directors already mentioned. Granted, the basic elements of good theatre are as true in television as they have always been but television is not the theatre. We must accept this. It is an entity. It is not a conglomeration of theatre and motion picture technique. A common and quite disturbing theory expounded by those who relegate the tv camera to some limbo of utility is that the play must not be sacrificed to the camera. This all too profound statement has become popular even among those directors who have supposedly made television their career. I must hasten to add, this theory is not shared by all of us.

Naturally, the play must not be sacrificed to the camera. This is not good television either. Further examination of this theory, however, reveals the real reason for such a statement. It is a negative attitude. The apostles of this credo never state what a tv camera should do or can do. They say only what it must not do. It must not get in the way. They refuse to recognize it as a strong yet flexible instrument which can add unmeasurably to their play. The camera is not some obstacle that must be conquered, not some bulky piece of electronic equipment that hinders a director. Nor is it some unweildy machine you must use to photograph a play.

The tv director and his camera, when it is properly used, combine to focus the eyes of the audience on what the director feels they should see. It lends to a free and fluid expression of the play. It exposes what is important and meaningful. It clarifies by eliminating the unnecessary. It dramatizes the actions and reactions. It becomes a part of the play. The director should use his camera to comment and highlight, to exaggerate and to understate. The sequence of pictures can and should create a very definite rhythm. Every play contains a meld of many tempos. The director and his actors work hard to establish this. By selecting the proper pictures and editing them carefully this rhythm is not only maintained but accented. Each picture should be used to help tell one story. If a picture, no matter how well composed distracts an audience it automatically detracts from the play. It serves no purpose except to draw attention to itself. Tricky shots must not be considered good simply because they are unusual. The camera must serve the play, not itself. It can conquer space and time. It knows no limits, no bounds. It is a director's obedient servant, prepared to do his bidding.

We must accept the camera. We must understand its functions. We must use it. I do.

BEN GRAUER
NBC
TV RADIO

SHIRLEY EGGLESTON
RADIO • TELEVISION
BROADWAY • SCREEN
LExington 2-1100

DuMont Accent On Pix in '55; May Make Own

Under the new streamlined DuMont network operation, it's anticipated that films will play a large part in the programming pattern of the future. Network, it's understood, may even go into tv film production on its own, utilizing its new and impressive east side New York studios, which are now being loaned out to CBS for filming of the Phil Silvers vidpix series. DuMont figures it makes more sense cashing in on its own facilities than any profits accruing from lend-leasing.

DuMont is hopeful that the bottleneck on updated film releases by major Hollywood studios will be broken in '55, thus permitting the web to move in and acquire solid pix properties (a la General Teleradio's acquisitions in '54).

Web streamlining procedures started several days ago, when it was decided to lop off an estimated 30 people in program production, three network salesmen, several engineers and others. Exact number let go in the general personnel reduction is not known, but the web's intentions were to make the payroll commensurate with lowered number of network stanzas. Further savings were achieved by DuMont through decreasing AT&T lines, and replacing them to a much greater degree by intensifying the kine operation. Ted Bergmann, web topper, said AT&T facilities were only 5% in use before the decision to minimize usage.

Memphis Gets Another Negro-Geared Station

Memphis.

Memphis has been greenlighted by the FCC for its ninth AM outlet which is expected to hit the ether here about March 1. The Tri-State Broadcasting Service has been okayed to operate on 1430 kc. The new firm is headed by Sam Phillips, platter recorder here; Clarence Camp of Southern Amusements, and James Connolly, skipper of WJLD, Birmingham.

Phillips will manage the new daytimer with Connolly handling sales. Station is expected to gear its programming for the Negro market giving this city three stations in the Negro programming field.

Just Give Me The Wide Open Spaces

By MARTIN JONES
(President, Television Producers, Inc., Board of Directors, Jamaican Film Centre)

"Thank you for letting me come into your living room."

How many times have you heard this phrase in the past six years? And who was the ad agency genius who decided that this was the proper thing to say? Or was it some comedian who heard that television was an intimate medium and decided that this phrase combined just the right proportions of intimacy and humility? Or perhaps it was one of those many-toothed emcees who for want of anything better to say (they seldom have anything better to say) hit upon this unhappy combination of words.

Actually, of course, it's not the words themselves that are unhappy. As a matter of fact I'd be very pleased to hear those words—providing that the person who uttered them **had** come into my living room, **had** sat in one of my chairs and **had** downed a couple of my best scotch highballs. But when the person in question was only a 12 or a 17 or even a 30-inch picture on my television set—I just won't buy that.

If there's any truth at all in this business of visiting living rooms via the electronic tube, chances are nine out of 10 that I've been visiting **him** in **his** livingroom. And the other one-tenth of the time I've been visiting in his kitchen. Where would television be without the livingroom set and the kitchen set?

I don't mean to knock tv. After all, I make my living in it. There are some good shows on the air—and some great ones. But—and here's where I make my point—the great ones don't come into your livingroom. They transport you right **out** of it. If you're always conscious that you're in your living-room watching a picture on the face of a glass tube, that's not great entertainment.

And what could be more conducive to complete absorption than a livingroom where you've few if any distractions, where you're comfortably settled in your favorite easy chair and where you've seldom more than one or two other people in the room with you? On the other hand, take a movie theatre. Your seat isn't nearly as comfortable as the one at home, people around you are eating popcorn and there are several hundred strangers seated all around you. Yet how much more often do you forget where you are and get completely carried away by the story! And this isn't because the Hollywood story is better. Nor does Hollywood have the better actors, writers, directors or producers. But all these things being equal (and they are!) movies will always come off as better entertainment for two reasons: domination and scope.

Domination is simple. It's just a matter of a large screen in a dark room. Your attention is riveted. But I won't go into this. I will predict, however, that it won't be many years before we have projected tv in which your video picture will be shown on one complete wall of your livingroom.

Scope is something else again. It's something we get snatches of on some of the better filmed tv shows. It's something you can seldom get under the limitations imposed by "live" studio tv. When you come right down to it, all it means is that if you're sitting in your livingroom you don't want to look through your video tube into someone else's livingroom. At least not all the time.

When a few years back, Hollywood awoke to the fact that tv would kill them if something weren't done they came up with Cinemascope, the panoramic screen, stereophonic sound—and foreign locations. They added scope to their films. They, of course, had always had a certain amount of scope. But before these extras were added you saw only part of the ocean, part of a battle or part of the prairie. Now you see the ocean to the horizon, the prairie to the foothills and the battle to its furthest reaches. And instead of the Montmartre being in Hollywood, Hollywood goes to Paris and gives you the real thing.

Television audiences will soon tire of two by four interiors. Where's the fun in sitting in one livingroom and looking into another?

Since at present the tv screen doesn't dominate the room we've got to add scope and depth to the video picture itself to give the illusion of domination. It means that tv is going to have to get out of the sound stages and bring its cameras to the mountains, the lakes, the oceans. It's going to have to shoot in Florida, in Texas, in Maine and North Dakota. And in Paris, London, Stockholm and Manila. Tv's got to think big, not necessarily in terms of "spectaculars" (although there's certainly a place for them in the medium), but in terms of "panorama"

I think we owe it to our audiences and ourselves to go out and see the world. The next few years aren't going to be easy—but they're going to be exciting. And maybe we'll finally find out which is more important in picture making . . . brains or money.

HARRY VON ZELL
Featured with GEORGE and GRACIE for Carnation and B. F. Goodrich
P.S. I also sell for Texaco!

Audience Reflexes Can Make Or Break A Telecast

By MAX LIEBMAN
(NBC Producer-Director)

The man who said, "Laugh and the world laughs with you" could very well have been a television producer. For, during my more than five years with the medium, I have found that the television studio audience is endowed with far-reaching powers and that its behavior may be governed by seemingly insignificant and unrelated factors.

Max Liebman

As far as its powers are concerned, I have found that the people watching in a studio can affect the actions of the performer and the home audience. Depending on the audience's enthusiasm, the performer can either be inspired to great heights or to ineffectual depths.

I remember my first encounter with the theatre audience in 1949 in the "Broadway Revue." NBC had leased the International Theatre as its first N. Y. television playhouse and, as the earlier shows went on week after week, it was inevitable that audience reactions varied—some of them were hot and others were cold. The actors would leave their dressing-rooms and often cry, "Where did they dig up that bunch of stiffs" or "Wow, the seats must be wired with electricity."

That the home audience can be affected by viewers in the studio is best borne out by an incident which occurred during our last show, "Spotlight."

During one of Jimmy Durante's sketches, the audience was really rolling with the performance—the laughs were hale and hearty.

A third of the way through the sketch, no reaction came over the speaker. I turned to the sound engineer and asked, "What happened?" I was told that something mechanical went haywire. I could hear a faint echo of laughter coming through the actors' microphones. The actors continued to perform for a third of the sektch with the same spirit since they could hear the live laughs, but in the control room it looked as if that portion of the sketch was just laying there.

After awhile, the engineer completed his repair and the roars of appreciation were heard again over the system.

The following day a few friends of mine remarked, "Say, that sketch conked out in the middle. It was only funny at the beginning and at the end."

I asked, "Why did you think it was unfunny in the middle?"

The answer was, "Well, I wasn't the only one—your theatre audience didn't laugh either."

Psychological Values

Barring mechanical failures, what makes a studio audience tick? A seemingly logical explanation such as the show is great one week and lousy another is not the only explanation of why one group reacts with enthusiasm and another just sits there in dead silence. A careful study has revealed many factors, but I must say that basically what causes an audience to react one way or another is still a deep dark secret.

The warmup before the show, we have found, has little effect (at least for us) on the subsequent reaction of the audience. But the temperature of the house, even the outside weather, both have been considered factors. A hot night causes lethargy. A cold brisk evening creates vibrations that bring alert reactions. Damp rainy evenings are depressing. And starry nights are uplifting.

Another theory is based on the makeup of the audience. There was a time at the International Theatre when we said, "We're getting the same audience—they're used to us—they know our style—the element of surprise is missing." I was led to believe this because I recall seeing a man and his little boy in the lounge one evening and the child said, "Hurry up, Daddy, or we won't have any seats." The man said, "Don't worry. Mother is there. She's saving the same seats as usual." Indeed, I could recognize literally dozens of faces repeated every week. It was reasonable to suppose that they could become blase.

But then would come an evening when the rafters would shake with roars, and that theory was shattered.

On another occasion we watched the reaction of the audience very keenly when we repeated a certain surefire sketch. The item was something we had done two years before, so this particular audience would not have necessarily witnessed it in the theatre. What killed them two years ago seemed to kill itself when repeated. On the other hand, another repeated sketch went twice as well. And so we would leave the theatre, still mystified by the strange and mysterious behavior of the people who came to see us.

Chain Reactions

The situation changed when we moved from the International Theatre to the Center. This was a huge temple of entertainment, and after a season in it we arrived at some pretty definite conclusions to which we still cling. The Center, with its audience three or four times greater than the International, created what I refer to as "multiple areas of response" as contrasted to the single area of response in the much smaller International. Containing many balconies and great width, the Center would have an audience composed of groups of people who were psychologically, emotionally, chemically and electrically unrelated to each other. If a joke didn't get a response in one area, it would get it in another, and we found that lulls and embarrassing silences hardly occurred at all. There somehow always seemed to be one group that would express audible approval. And, when the entire audience or all of the areas of response reacted favorably to the same joke, the result was thunderous.

During the performances of this year's color shows, we have encountered additional factors which influence audience reaction. Most of our productions have been staged at NBC's new Brooklyn studio where provision for an audience has been entirely inadequate, and where at times we have played a comedy show with no audience at all. It was then that we attempted to pipe in the reaction of an audience which was seated at the Century Theatre watching the show on a black-and-white screen. We found this setup completely unsatisfactory.

Trying to explain the lack of enthusiasm in the Century, the house-manager has stated that many of the viewers there felt cheated by coming to the theatre and not seeing a live performance. Others, he said, were disappointed in not seeing the show in color; they could have stayed at home and watched it on a black-and-white set.

We had no studio audience for "Best Foot Forward" which was staged in Brooklyn. Only half a house viewed it at the Century, many staying away because of a storm. The result, in terms of theatre audience response, was disastrous. What response there was could not be piped in properly to the actors in Brooklyn to inspire them, and there was very little to send over the air.

With "Lady in the Dark" another problem arose. Here the audience, again in the Century, responded magnificently with applause and laughter. But, when an attempt was made to corral it electronically, there were technical difficulties which created feed-back.

So important is the audience factor that we now stage our more intimate revues at the Colonial, a theatre with less performing space than at Brooklyn but one with a viewing capacity of 550 as compared with 300 in Brooklyn.

The audience is closer to the actors. This proximity creates warmth. The vibrations flow from one to the other. And, while there is but one area of response, it offers a good fighting chance.

The first show of the season put on at the Colonial, "Fanfare," proved to be a great success audience-wise. Besides, there being more seats, much of the success stemmed from the theatre viewers being able to watch the performance live onstage. This was opposed to the Brooklyn setup where much of the stage action took place out of the audience's line of vision.

We continue our clinical research, but the audience still remains one of the major problems in the transmission of comedy. About the only definite major conclusion I could reach after wading through the many contradictory factors is that a large audience is more desirable than a small one. Hasn't it always been so?

John Cameron Swayze

HARRY TOWNES
STAGE—SCREEN—TELEVISION
Management
GRACE LYONS

GOODMAN CLARIFIES STATUS ON TALENT

Harry S. Goodman Productions this week detailed further reasons for producing radio dramas in Australia instead of the U.S. The company doesn't feel that American Federation of Television and Radio Artists is being unfair, but instead that the organization hasn't as yet reevaluated standards that applied when radio was in its "heyday."

Harry Goodman, boss of the outfit, said that in order "to enable producers to supply quality programs at prices stations can afford, it's necessary to understand the stations' problems and help solve them. However, under current union regulations, replays, which are almost a necessity in today's radio market, are impossible to arrange because the radio actor has to be paid again the original fee for each rebroadcast."

"Radio talent," Goodman stated, "is suffering unmeasurably because the stations cannot pay the rates, which are as high or higher than in the heydays of radio." Idea was that the market's shrunk (necessitating replays) but the thesping prices haven't.

Ludgin's New Status

Chicago.

Earle Ludgin, founder and prexy of the ad agency bearing his name, has moved up as chairman of the board with Vincent R. Bliss taking over the prez chair.

Jane Daly, radio-tv director, was named the agency's first femme veepee.

THE ART OF BEING YOURSELF

By SHERMAN BILLINGSLEY

A newspaper interviewer asked me a few weeks ago if I had ever had any coaching in diction, showmanship, emceemanship or anything of that sort. I immediately suspected—although I, of course, didn't say so—that he had never seen the Stork Club tv show, because if he had the question would never have been asked. I think it's fairly obvious that I have never had any such coaching. And let me say that I don't intend to in the future.

Sherman Billingsley

I don't kid myself that I am an actor or an emcee—but that doesn't bother me. I don't even kid myself that I'm the star of the Stork Club show—although I emcee it, own it and produce it. The Club itself is the star of the show. The Club is what generates turning to ABC-TV Saturday nights at 10 to watch the goins-on. I don't. That is why, since we've been on ABC, we're showing more of the Stork Club itself than we ever have before. We have four cameras, and they eavesdrop all over the place. The tv audience sees more of the place than they would if they were actually there in person.

I just happen to be the guy who knows the Stork Club better than anybody else in the world, and I think I know how to present it to the public. I am not a professional master of ceremonies, but I *am* a professional host. So, since the televiewers are, in a very real sense, Stork Club guests, I regard them as such and talk to them in the same way I talk to my friends who visit the Club. This works out well from several viewpoints. The people at home don't feel they're watching a show that is being carefully staged for them—they are vicariously *at* the club, rubbing elbows with the celebrities, enjoying the conversation, meeting the people they've always heard and read about at the place they've always heard and read about—with no tab to worry about at the end of the evening, and wearing a robe and slippers if they want to.

For my part, it means that I don't have to pretend to be anything I'm not. I don't tell jokes, I don't sing, I don't dance. I just welcome people to the Stork Club, try to make them feel at home and see that they have a good time while they're there—which is exactly what I've been doing for the past 15 years, long before television was a gleam in anybody's lens.

Even our guest stars are more "guests" than "stars." I chat with them the same way I would if it were any other night of the week and there were no tv cameras around. And when they do get up to perform it's more in the spirit of house guests performing for friends at a party than that of paid entertainers going through their paces. They have a good time, the patrons of the club have a good time, and—believe me—I have a good time. The result is that the people watching at home, and they are the most important of all, have a good time.

Let me give another example of what I mean by "being yourself." Not long ago, right in the middle of a very elegant fashion show on the program, a waiter dropped a tray plled high with dishes and sprawled on his face right in front of the tv cameras. Our switchboard as well as ABC's lit up like Christmas trees. Over 500 calls came in, virtually every one of them from a viewer pleading with us not to fire the waiter. Of course I didn't fire him. Waiters have dropped trays at the Stork Club before, and the fact that it happened on our tv show didn't make it a terrible crime. As a matter of fact, the reaction to the incident was that it was the kind of human slip that struck a responsive note with every viewer who had ever spilled the soup or found himself in any kind of embarrassing spot—and that includes nearly everybody.

Looking back on nearly five years of the Stork Club on tv, during which the show has never failed to make money for the sponsor, the network and the Club, I think, if I were asked to give the formula for its success, I would simply cite the title of this little essay. My friend Ben Gross, reviewing the show, was once kind enough to write about me, "He's merely himself—perfectly natural—and therein lies his chief appeal." Well, I have never tried to cultivate tv "appeal" of any sort, but if being myself is the right answer I'm very glad—because I don't know how to do anything else.

BILL SILBERT
Radio and Television
Circle 5-4577

MMM's Own AM Poll

By MARY MARGARET McBRIDE

I suppose there will be few, if any, defending radio, and I've been wanting to anyway, because for the past two months I have been making a private survey of my own.

You may remember that back in May I went off the air for a little rest after 20 years of broadcasting. It was understood then that I would go on television in the fall. It was a wonderful summer except for one disturbing element—letters and letters and letters, from all over the country, written by my listeners of 10, 15 and even 20 years, because they thought I was giving up radio forever. That was how my survey began, and this is how it came out:

1. 90% of the letters said they prefer radio to television.

2. Some admitted they had not yet acquired a television set, and some even live where it is impossible to get television reception.

3. But most of them told me they have sets which they watch at night. With few exceptions, the letters contained one note, "I just can't watch television in the daytime" . . . "I used to iron while you talked" . . . "I used to do the dishes while you were on" . . . "If you're only on television, it's really goodbye from now on" . . .

It isn't just that you can do your work while listening to radio, and can't do it while watching television. Many women really seem to feel that radio allows you more scope for your imagination, and that it is more soothing. Others pointed out that you never get as strung up listening as watching, and practically all complained of being tired after a lengthy television indulgence.

I've found it hard to interview on television for you have so many distractors that it is difficult to lose yourself in the person, as I need to do. Besides, you have to worry about your hair and your dress and the fact that you are likely to smudge your makeup if you forget everything except what the other person is saying—which you certainly ought to do if the interview is to be any good. I'm sure a way can be found to meet all this but for the present I am realizing what blessed comfort and peace there is in just plain old radio.

'Not As A Writer'

By AL SCHWARTZ & SHERWOOD SCHWARTZ
(With apologies to the 1954 best seller)

Hollywood.

The writer came out of his office and he closed the door gently behind him. He looked up and there was a little boy.

"Hello, Luke," he murmured.

The little boy lowered his eyes humbly and when the writer reached the top step of the porch the little boy turned and put out his hand, the writer relaxed his grip on his typewriter, and they walked down the steps together and across the sidewalk to the Jaguar.

The writer got in on the driving side. The little boy held the writer's typewriter with both hands. He looked down at it with a curious mixture of love, and awe, and longing. This was the typewriter that had turned out witty dialog and clever repartee for the biggest comics in Hollywood.

They had made seven calls this night. It was a good night. On these nocturnal visits the writer would let him right into the comic's house, and the minute the door opened there was that wonderful smell, that wonderful smell of ink, and ulcers, and money. He always hoped with a prayer that the writer would never think he would touch anything. He remembered one time in the writer's office when the writer had put his hand on his shoulder and led him to the white case, the shiny steel that sheltered thousands of jokes. They were meaningless to the seven year old boy, and the writer had named them for him.

"This is a pun—"
(A pun . . . a pun . . .)
"And this is a belly laugh—"
(Belly laugh . . . belly laugh . . .)
"And this is a topical joke—"
(Topical joke . . . topical joke . . . pun . . . belly laugh . . . belly laugh . . .)

The little boy's thoughts were interrupted as the Jaguar reached the comic's house.

"Now pay attention," the writer said to Luke." My comic has a serious pain in his script. Here's what I'm going to do. I'm going to make a deep cut in Page 5. I'm going to remove those two local jokes. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir."

The writer entered the house, and Luke followed carrying his typewriter.

The comic smiled a wan greeting.

The writer pointed to Luke and said, "My helper."

My helper! It rang in Luke's ears. It thundered. The hairs at the back of his neck prickled. Stiff with pride he followed the writer and the comic into the den.

"Got no confidence in the script, and I got it bad," the comic confided.

"We'll have to start operating at once," said the writer turning to Luke. "Did you boil the pencils?"

Luke's world collapsed.

"No," he said, ashamed to his depths.

"Never mind," said the writer, "We'll sterilize the keys on the typewriter and put in a new ribbon."

Luke watched intently while the writer expertly made an incision on Page 5. The young boy memorized each action so he could do it next time. The writer's fingers searched automatically for the weak punchlines and corny phrases. With a quick motion of a pair of gleaming scissors, he severed the offending dialog and neatly sutured the remaining gems.

There was a small groan from the comic. "Thanks, I feel better now."

The writer and Luke walked to the door. There was a small mirror in the hall and Luke got a glimpse of his face. He noticed with dismay that it was quite pale.

Then they were in the Jaguar, homeward bound.

"Wasn't so bad, was it," the writer said.

Luke looked adoringly at the writer. "I should have had those pencils boiled," he said humbly.

"Next time," said the writer.

Next time . . there was to be a next time . . His eyes filled. His future path lay clear before him. His father wanted him to be a harness maker, but he knew in his heart that the only conection he'd ever have with horses would be to write a monolog for Bob Hope about Bing Crosby.

* * *

He was one of the hundreds of young men on the campus of Duffy Tavern Tech. He had tried to enroll at the William & Mary Livingstone College of Jack Benny, where the tuition was cheap, but the enrollment was filled.

In the months to come he would linger and hunger often. But now he was in Comedy College. Nothing would ever break his hold. Just four years, and he would earn his M.D.—Doctor of Manuscript, and perhaps even P.D.W.—Plots Delivered Wholesale.

He studied hard for his examinations. He won honors in Straightline Writing, Blackouts, Lead-Ins, Sight Gags and Comedy Commercials. Then came the crucial test—Script Dissection!

He walked into the Amphitheatre with great confidence. A script girl, her head turbaned in white gauze, smiled at him as she helped him on with a pair of rubber gloves. Another script girl handed him a mask.

"Must I wear a mask?", asked Luke.

The girl nodded solemnly. I've read the script. You'd better wear it."

Luke put on the mask, and looked down at the typing table. The script lay there pale, drawn and lifeless. This obviously called for major surgery. It had a double rupture of the premise, and a hardening of the story line. He held out his hand for an instrument. In a movement too deft, too quick to follow, the head script girl handed him an eraser. He probed, found the sensitive area and started exploring.

He glanced up, stared at a clock on the wall, and bent over the table again. Time passed.

With sure movements he inserted a new plot, and reinforced the weak situations. Finally, the operation was over, and he sank exhausted into a chair.

The head script girl came over, and massaged his fingers. "Never have I witnessed such a brilliant operation," she gushed.

"I couldn't have done it without your help, Miss . . uh . . uh . . ."

"Christina . . . Christina Diamond," she said.

"You must be the Swede they told me about. How did you ever learn to keep the operating room so sanitary and neat?"

She smiled modestly. "I used to clean up all the dirty birds for George Gobel."

Two weeks later they were married.

Luke married Christina because it was love at first sight, because she was so great in the operating room—and besides, he needed her money to pay for his tultion.

* * *

Ahead was San Fernando Valley. Luke had become a comedy writer.

Christina sat at his side proudly aware of the force within Luke; the force that would some day make the world laugh.

The Ventura bus stopped.

They alighted, dazed, smiling endlessly.

Waiting to greet them was the famous headwriter, Sy Lippyberg.

HANK SYLVERN
Musical Director
JANE FROMAN SHOW
PHIL SILVERS SHOW
CBS-TV
Signature Music Productions
MU 8-6600

WM. KEENE
A Healthy Happy
And Prosperous
New Year To All

He was a tall man, broad, burly, his beanie cap set squarely on his head, his Sy Devore, custom-tailored, straightjacket bore the unmistakable look of a comedy writer.

His words of welcome were simple. "We're in big trouble," he said.

Luke was to hear these words many times.

Lippyberg grabbed Luke by the elbows—he dare not touch his hands, hands that he needed desperately for the typewriter. "We have to rush right over to the County Network for Sick Television Shows. The wards are filled with them."

A look passed between Luke and Christina. Here, then, was his golden moment. Quietly she handed him his pencil-box.

A moment later, Luke and Lippyberg were on their way to the County Network.

Mr. Snider, the superintendent, met them at the door. "We haven't a moment to waste," he cried. "Our sick beds are filled to capacity."

It turned out even worse than Mr. Snider had said. Luke checked the charts in the Panel Show Ward. They were all the same; temperature up, rating down. He checked the charts in the Variety Ward. Here the complaint was different; Pulse Weak, ARB strong. In the Situation Comedy Ward the charts indicated a real epidemic; author arthritis, and plot paralysis.

It was a terrifying spectacle of disease running rampant. In the face of such overwhelming disaster, Luke's pencil box seemed weak and inadequate.

Lippyberg and Snider looked to Luke for an answer. Their eyes pleaded.

Luke's thoughts returned to his childhood. When he carried typewriters, and waited in Jaguars. If he gave them the right answer now he would soon own two Jaguars. One for him, and one for his typewriter.

He stared back at them, a confident smile playing about his lips. "I've got the solution!", he announced.

"For which ward?" asked Snider.

With firmness and surety, Luke replied, "For all the wards."

"Is it a new wonder drug?" asked Snider.

"Wonder drug," sneered Luke disdainfully. "What I have would make penicillin crawl back into its mold."

"For television sake, what is it?" demanded Snider.

"Gentlemen," said Luke, "Behold this pencil box. It is not a pencil box at all."

"What is it?" they marvelled.

"A Whoopee Box," gloated Luke.

"What does it do," asked Snider.

"It insures laughter. A simple transfusion will cure any of your sick patients," said Luke smugly. "In a word you're looking at canned laughter."

"And you're looking at canned writers," chortled Snider.

"You mean—?" gasped Lippyberg.

"Yes," said Snider," I'm hiring your machine and letting you both go."

* * *

So ends the story of Luke,
A writer who sealed his own doom.
His invention proved a boomerang
And with it he rang his own boom.

So Who's Watching The Store? The Broadcaster—That's Who

By MIKE JABLONS
(Freelance Radio-TV Publicist)

There's an old vaude blackout that takes place in a small country store run by an entrepreneur who hires as his staff all the members of his family. One by one, for various reasons, the relations take off during working hours to attend to personal affairs leaving the establishment bereft of sales help The line that blows out the Kleigels comes when the head of the house returns to his shop, finds no one there to cater to the customers, and wails, "So who's watching the store?"

A lot of radio broadcasters (remember them, they sell air time without the benefit of pix to look at on a wavering screen) nowadays are asking themselves the same question, "Who's watching the store?" when an advertiser or an agency man asks, "Fine, but what do you offer in the way of merchandising?"

In the high pressure competition for the advertiser's buck, some marginal AM operators have drawn up fabulous lists of "merchandising extras" to offer potential clients. That most of these "extras" exist solely on paper is beside the point. The fact remains that by offering "merchandising extras" out of all proportion to the value of the air time bought, the broadcaster is signing his own death warrant. It's an unhealthy situation.

However, most of them, including the small indies and the large network o-and-o outlets, regard merchandising as dirty a word as spit. Who indeed is watching the store when an agency account man has the nerve to ask the station what merchandising opportunities it will offer his client who plans a sked that calls for five 30-second spots per week, two weeks duration, and a 24-hour cancellation clause.

Soon the agency man wants to know if the station can set up a tie-in with a group of retail grocers and/or druggists who will display window streamers, counter cards, center-aisle gondolas, table racks next to the cash register, big blow ups around the store, pyramids on the counter, and "a few other" point of purchase displays of the client's product—not to mention plugs for the product on shirt wrappers, laundry tickets (okay for chop suey accounts where the prospects can read up and down instead of sideways), jumbo postcards, a billboard or two in congested areas, maybe a "spec" sign in the heart of town, blimps with running signs (for cold remedies perhaps signs with running noses), a p.a. by the station's top disk jock in Glutch's Market ("and have him stand near the shelf with the right goods when they take pictures"), and finally, "How about a half-dozen free promotional spots on the air during your "A" time to plug our spots?" (bought in "C" fringe time natch).

Sound fantastic? Well, actually it's not really too far from the truth. There have been some really fantastic demands made of broadcasters in the last year or so by account execs who forget that they are selling their clients on the medium of radio, and think they're selling in-store p-o-p promotion with a slight extra charge for radio time thrown in.

If that's the case fellas, you're gonna kill the w.k. layer of the 14-k ovoids. Either radio has the power to move products off the shelf and into the shopping cart just because of its impact and sincerity, and not because it guarantees to deliver x number of counter cards in y number of supermarkets, or you might as well invite the BBC boys to come on over and start running our audio operation in two or three years hence because the profit motive in radio will cease to exist.

Radio ain't dead yet. But if some play-it-close-to-the-vest advertisers and their Brooks suited fraternity Bros. on Madison Avenue continue as they have been in recent months, they will have to be named accessories after the fact at radio's inquest.

It is not the broadcaster's job to run an efficient, well-managed, Inventoried supermarket. That's the job of the store manager, the chain owner, and all the other staff echelons right down to the kid who stuffs the oversized shopping bags and tears off the itemized tickertape price list.

The broadcaster's responsibility rests in putting on good programs, building favorable time slots, and providing a program service that lots of people will listen to. That's why he gets a charter from the FCC to operate his station, whether it is a 50-kw powerhouse in a big metropolis or a 250-watt coffeepot in Squeedunk, O. His responsibility is to be a showman. Nobody expects him to be a 12th-of-a-dozen soup peddler. Conversely, it would be equally unreal to expect Joe's Meat Market to be run like Barnum's Museum.

A Happy Medium

The happy medium lies somewhere between. The shopkeeper watches his store and the broadcaster tends to his programs. There is a meeting ground between them. A long-term advertiser with a big spending budget is entitled to get a little langniappe from the broadcaster such as a mailing to dealers or a request for some window displays in leading outlet stores arranged and paid for by the broadcaster. That's part of the give and take of legit business.

But why should the lazy storekeeper, who under-orders and is caught short when customers ask for an advertised item, or who stocks shelves haphazardly, or runs a dirty store, or changes his window displays as infrequently as his underwear—why should he expect the broadcaster to send representatives around to run his store for him? There are thousands of case histories of independent retail merchants who have competed successfully against chain store operations by virtue of increased services offered to offset the penny or two price differential on brand items. They can get along comfortably. They don't need outside help to make their operation profitable.

The merchant who sits back and expects the radio station in his community to drag customers in by their rears instead of their ears is sadly misinformed. And so is the manufacturer who expects merchandising to carry the cost of his ad budget. The ad exec who promises his client merchandising billboard space on the moon (plus a clear night for viewing) as an "extra" for a radio time buy is just numbering the days that he will be able to draw a 15% commish from radio sales.

Merchandising is all right as long as reason prevails. But when the advertiser asks, "Who's watching the store?" the answer had better not be the broadcaster.

JOE FRANKLIN
M.C.'s "Movies For You" followed by "JOE FRANKLIN'S MEMORY LANE" over WABC-TV, N. Y. 2-3:55 p.m., Mon. thru Fri.
On Radio: "MAIN STREET MEMORIES," Syndicated Nationally.
PLaza 8-2664

A Standard Method Of Telefilm Buying

By ROGER W. CLIPP
(Gen. Mgr., WFIL-TV)

Philadelphia.

A few months ago I suggested that a business-like method of buying and selling—films for television can and should be worked out. As a starting point for further discussion I proposed a fixed scale with prices based on percentages of each station's rate card rates for specific time periods.

R. W. Clipp

It is my idea that setting up this system or a similar one would provide a much needed standard of buying and selling television films. Such a system would be of benefit to both station operators and to the film producers. Sharing in the benefit would be the masters we both serve—the members of the television audience.

Some system is needed. The existing practice—and believe me no one will deny it does exist—is for a film salesman to suggest a price that he is sure is too high, for the buyer to counter with a price that he knows is too low and to begin negotiations from that point. The bargaining is always on a hit and miss basis. You pay a substantial price for the hits and you pay the same price for the misses.

When the suggestion was made I was quite prepared for the blast that was bound to follow from the telefilm producers. Many of the shots I think were completely off target.

I'd like to state first that I am in the radio and television business and that producing films and selling them is a field in which I have had no experience beyond some rather good home movies I have made of my young grandson. But what the film producers are doing affects my business. What they are doing concerns me. I have an interest in attempting to solve industry problems wherever they exist.

The proposal I made was not intended as the final answer. It was a suggestion to those who with deep knowledge of their own business might come up with a workable formula. Even the critics agree that a remedy is needed; it's up to the experts to prescribe.

In outlining my reasons for aiming at costs based on percentage of rate card time I'd like to recall that among my talking points was a comparison of media production costs. Such costs in newspapers amount to 6.9% of space rates and in magazines amount to 11.5% of space rates while television time salesmen must propose an outlandish 86.2% figure.

The vice president of one of the nation's large film organizations called this comparison "fallacious" and added that it's impossible to compare printed ads with commercial sections of television programs.

We do not operate a subscription tv station and don't enjoy the advantage of paid circulation to help cover costs. I know of no television station that does operate on a paid circulation basis. When television stations compare costs with printed media we must use industry program costs. This brings us back to where we started with an 86.2% production figure. Perhaps the media cannot be compared but we found through long experience that the percentage is too high. It's a percentage that we never approach in the production of local programs. It's much too high and one that loud arguments can't lower; only sound business practices can.

A method of helping to bring that figure more nearly into line with production costs for other media is a solid platform placed under the buying of television films. In my opinion, allowing present conditions to continue will ultimately prove the undoing of the stations and the film companies themselves.

Applying Pix Technique

Hollywood has developed its concept of "A" "B" and "C" pictures. I think this can be carried over into television. I know that a television series starring William Holden, Ava Gardner and Bing Crosby, for example, is going to be offered at premium prices while another series using unknowns may be offered at whatever price the producers feel the traffic will bear.

Broadcasters expect to pay top dollar for premium productions and less for less important productions. But I ask who is to decide at what price a "B" or "C" telefilm should be sold in each market?

It would appear logical that the station operators must be considered in setting these prices. Station rates are based on experience and knowledge of the value of television advertising in any given market. Rates are established and publicized. It seems to me that a sound system for setting tv film prices could be based on these published time rates.

Let me point out that it doesn't matter whether a station has rate card No. 8, No. 9 or even No. 1 in effect. The rate card in effect can be used as the basis for determining a film price. The television film salesman or the station representative can point to the latest rate card rate, apply the percentage that the film is going to cost and a price could be reached without the hours of needless bargaining and negotiations for better prices than now take place.

What will the percentage of the rate card be? Well, at the risk of drawing further fire, I'd like to advance the idea that for an "A" telefilm series the telefilm salesman set a figure of 80% of the station's rate card price for the time classification applicable. This would hold true whether the film be a quarter-hour film or an hour film or feature films as well as for the half-hour series which are most often for sale. Film charges might be based on the one-time rate in each of the station's time classifications. For a "B" film the cost to the station might be 65% of the station's rate card cost for the time period applicable. For a "C" 50% and for a "D" picture—and all of us have bought them—40%. Thus a class "D" picture scheduled at 11 p.m. would be offered for 40% of a station's one-time rate covering the 11-11:30 p.m. telecasting time. "Too high," say the station operators—"Too low," answer the telefilm producers. Let's get together and see if we can't come up with a workable mean. Let the film producers and distributors who know the film business best decide in which category any given film series belongs and stick with that designation. It won't take long for the industry at large to determine whether any individual producer is classifying his pictures properly. Let the actual price then be based on some percentage of a rate card that takes into consideration all the elements of cost and knowledge of a market that's part and parcel of the daily operation of any television station anywhere.

Pricing Second Runs

I have placed almost complete emphasis on establishing a standard method for buying first-run films. I can see no reason why a similar pricing system, using lower percentages of the station's rate card of course—could not be devised to handle second and subsequent runs. As a matter of fact, the common practice of offering subsequent runs as a bargaining fulcrum has reached the point of abuse in my opinion. With constant increase in the number of television receivers in established markets, with more product available and with advertisers growing more emphatic in their justifiable demands for firstrun films, we have found that subsequent runs really add very little in making contracts more appetizing.

As I have said, a remedy must be found. As a layman with some knowledge of the patient's condition, background and habits I have suggested a few of the ingredients. Together with the film experts station operators can come up with a prescription that's just what the doctor ordered.

KENNETH ROBERTS

Dollar A Second
Sealy T.V. Playhouse
Toni—Bulova
SU 7-5400

How Local Can You Get?

By HAMILTON SHEA
(NBC V. P. in Charge of WRCA & WRCA-TV, N. Y.)

The best read newspaper in the world with the largest total circulation is the community weekly. I live in Chappaqua, N.Y., and while on occasion I might miss reading the big metropolitan daily, I never miss a copy of The Newcastle Tribune, our hometown weekly. Why? For the same reason you perhaps subscribe to your community newspaper: it provides all the news of your neighbors, friends, and, occasionally foes.

Hamilton Shea

It was while being observed reading the Newcastle Tribune on my commuter train one morning that an advertising agency wag, who knows of my association with two of the nation's top local stations, leaned over my shoulder and peered at the four-sheet paper and said, "Say, Ham, how local can you get?" Not only did he provide me with a smile on a bleak morning, but also with the title of this piece, and some food for thought.

Well, I say now, how local can I get?

Or, better yet, how local can we get—those of us who keep WRCA Radio and WRCA-TV programmed and on the air 365 days of the year?

Well, we're local enough to announce that a listner of ours living, say, in Ho-ho-kus, New Jersey, has a new member of the family. Local enough for us to say that the N. Y. Central commuter trains are running 10 minutes behind schedule. Local enough for us to say that the school in Wilton, Conn., is closed today. Local enough for us to say that Grand Central Parkway is having a major traffic jam and to suggest alternate routes to motorists.

Some people, especially those who don't live here, are surprised to learn that 50,000-watt radio and high-power television station in the nation's largest city and first market has such a hometown touch. But we live in homes here, and have the same problems as those who live in Muncie, Ind.

It's the Time That Counts

WRCA and WRCA-TV keys its programming and tone of the station to these problems and entertainment needs. Recently, we have added to our News and Special Events Dept. (which was set up this year) a roving reporter. He is on call virtually 24 hours a day. WRCA has provided him with a mobile unit equipped with tape recorders, police telephones, still cameras, and, of course, radio communication.

Wherever news breaks in the New York metropolitan area the WRCA mobile unit will be on-the-scene. That means that WRCA listeners will be on-the-scene, too. Because we'll broadcast the reports on a bulletin basis. And we cover everything from a traffic accident to a five-alarm fire.

Local documentaries pertaining to community problems are scheduled on a regular basis on WRCA and WRCA-TV. If something is happening, WRCA doesn't just happen to be there, it's planned that way. And our listeners know it.

Our personalities are *friends* of our listeners. They make regular and frequent visits to every neighborhood in the WRCA listening area. They visit women's clubs, super-markets, department stores, and attend important functions at Madison Square Garden and the great hotels of New York to meet their audience and visit with them.

WRCA and WRCA-TV have gone to the community and become part

(Continued on page 200)

Zivcolor: A Tint Mint

By JOHN L. SINN
(Pres., Ziv Television Programs, Inc.)

There are two vital questions facing the syndicated television film industry today. The first is whether or not there is a market for high quality, and high cost, television productions. The second is whether or not the time is ripe for color television.

The answer to both of these questions, Ziv believes, is YES!!!

John L. Sinn

There is not only willingness on the part of the advertiser to buy high quality television film productions, there is an active desire. As evidence of our faith in this desire, Ziv has just released the Eddie Cantor Comedy Theater, the highest budgeted television film ever produced.

Budgeted at more than $53,000 per program, the Eddie Cantor Comedy Theater carries the highest rate card ever issued for a Ziv production or for any other syndicated television film.

Yet, despite this high price, the Cantor program was sold out in 23 markets, including such major cities as Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Indianapolis, and Milwaukee before the film was officially placed on sale.

In addition, during the first three weeks of the national sales drive, the Eddie Cantor Comedy Theatre was sold out in an additional 100 markets for a total of 125 markets.

Among the first buyers were such prominent breweries as Drewry's Ltd., which purchased the program for 11 midwestern markets, San Francisco Brewing Co., and Blatz Brewing Co.

In New York, the program was purchased by P. Ballantine & Sons, makers of Ballantine Beer, who switched from a dramatic program that the company had sponsored earlier. Ballantine also purchased the program for 24 additional East Coast markets.

The Cantor show has been the fastest-selling film program ever placed on the market, demonstrating that high quality shows of this caliber win ready acceptance among advertisers and agencies.

The whole history of the Eddie Cantor Comedy Theater proves that the television film market is definitely bullish . . . if the product offers the advertiser top names such as Eddie Cantor plus the best possible supporting casts, and if these personalities are backed up by the most lavish production elements.

Equally as successful as the Eddie Cantor Comedy Theater have been such other high budget Ziv programs as "Meet Corliss Archer," starring Ann Baker and Mary Brian, "Favorite Story" with Adolphe Menjou, "I Led Three Lives," starring Richard Carlson, and "Mr. District Attorney" with David Brian.

In producing these programs, as well as in producing the Cantor program, Ziv spared no cost in filming the finest possible television show. And the sales results on these five programs are further proof of the vast market for high quality television film.

"Meet Corliss Archer," for example, after only four months of selling, was sold out in more than 150 markets, including all of the major areas, and is now pushing the 200 market mark. "Favorite Story," "I Led Three Lives" and "Mr. District Attorney" are all nearing the 200 market point, and are among the most popular shows, rating-wise, on the air today.

$4,000,000 Color Investment

Now, to color.

Over four years ago, Ziv made up its mind that color television was around the corner. As a result of this decision, we have invested more than $4,000,000 in the development of our color techniques until today Ziv has the most extensive color operation in syndicated television.

In addition to shooting all films in color, Ziv has developed its own color technique, Zivcolor. Through a combination of the finest color film, plus Ziv techniques in lighting, costuming, settings, camera work and other production phases, Zivcolor makes Ziv telefilm products the most dramatic and forceful color film produced.

Today's color market is developing at a faster rate than we had believed possible four years ago. More and more stations are equipped with color film scanning equipment. Zivcolor has been tested on this equipment and we can report that its reproduction is outstanding.

We believe that in the very near future advertisers will find that only through color television can they make the greatest sales impact, and, as a result, will force set manufacturers to increase the rate of development and production of large screen television.

The initial stages of large-scale color television will be hectic, with stations seeking to be first on the air with color telecasts, and film producers conducting rapid experiments to produce quality color films.

However, Ziv did all its experimenting with color four years ago, and thus is equipped to supply top quality color television film products to stations and advertisers on demand. In addition to shooting current film products, including such programs as "Meet Corliss Archer," "Eddie Cantor Comedy Theater," "I Led Three Lives," "Favorite Story," "Mr. District Attorney," and "Cisco Kid," in color, Ziv will continue to produce all future series in Zivcolor.

Because we have been experimenting with color for so long, we now know where and how color can be used most effectively. We know, for instance, that the outdoor settings against which "Cisco Kid" is filmed will lend themselves magnificently to color. We know how to use color to take fullest advantage of the costuming, and historical settings of so many "Favorite Story" dramas. Again, color will be utilized to its fullest to delineate the lavish settings and costumes of the Eddie Cantor Comedy Theater.

Although Ziv's preparation for color has cost millions of dollars, we feel that the extra expense is an investment rather than a risk. We are prepared, today, to provide advertisers and stations with the finest possible color product the day that manufacturers start turning out color sets in quantity.

The color programs we have prepared will have the same high quality and high rating as their black and white editions, and will also have the advantage of being beyond the experimental stage.

The future of syndicated television film then rests on the answers to these two questions. Those film producers who are willing to discard inexpensive productions and go all out with high quality and lavish productions, those producers who are willing to shoot in color, to build up backlogs of color films which will result in secure residual income in the future, those television producers will chart the future of the television film industry.

The Ziv Company is taking far-reaching steps in both directions . . . that of high quality and that of color. We will continue to push back the tv film frontier in order to increase the growth of this important television media.

Sports: From Foam To Lather

By ART WOODSTONE

"Without brewery sponsorship millions of Americans, including prohibitionists as well as anti-prohibitionists, might well be unable to sit in their living rooms to see and hear games." To that—a comment last spring by counsel for the U. S. Brewers Foundation in defense against the Bryson Bill—a tv salesman allegedly quipped: "So it's beer that's giving me ulcers."

The salesman's intestinal observation might as easily refer, however, to razor blades, cars, refrigerators oil companies or whatever type product is a potential or actual sports broadcast-telecast bankroller. A look back over 1954 in sports and tv is a revelation of consecutive stomach pains. Locally or nationally, the salesman who's selling a schedule of athletes, instead of dealing in the usual instabilities of a dramatic package or a hot-and-cold variety showcasing, has pains to spare. They come shooting in from all sides—from the sports promoter or professional "sports enthusiasts" who disdain tv completely or who are so erratic as to be untrustworthy or who suddenly see in video a chance to make that proverbial killing; from the athlete who suddenly figures his talents are worth more on a one-shot basis than Jackie Gleason's over 13 telecasts; from the sponsor about bad ratings, or from the sport itself (one in particular, through which a couple of benevolent advertisers apparently hope to revive the "glory that was Jacobs Beach"). On and on goes the list of problems for station, network, their employees and the employees of the advertiser. It's television against the world of sports.

After long-time-in-coming decisions (with similar tactics again this year) the National Collegiate Athletic Conference provided the prime example of a sports problem. A big hullabaloo as to what to restrict and what not to restrict in college football tore NCAA's ranks asunder (for benefit of press and public) with the generous decision to allow 13 games to be played at some reasonable price. The nets were suckered in by the great bargain, with ABC frantically outbidding its tele rivals for honors at $2,226,000 and a virtual guarantee to give the radio network sister over to NCAA bidding. For some reason, ABC found that the vein in its "gold mine" had played out; the package, though finally sold, cost the network plenty in coin and prestige. That was the biggest case of ulcers sports-induced for the year.

While the ABC deal meant money, the DuMont deal meant, to a great degree, something more—the life of a network. Not that DuMont will fold just through loss of the $900,000 guaranteed to the National Professional Football League, but to have made a profit from sale to Westinghouse or some other underwriter could presumably have eased that network's financial straits and justified its continued existence to the board of directors.

Baseball Losing Glitter?

Away from football and into baseball. The diamond is losing its glitter, it would appear. Gillette (so big in so many phases of tv sports) is paying around a $1,000,000 per annum for World Series rights. Contract continues through '56, but it was when late '53 merged with early '54 that first word of asking $3,000,000 a year for World Series rights came up. It was the players' idea, since they benefit most from such coin. It might never go as high as $3,000,000, particularly since baseball commissioner Ford Frick said nobody'd pay that much (with telecasters figuring he was right), but there is a good chance of it exceeding present high, if theatre tv doesn't get it first.

Another painful view of baseball augurs the first rumblings against the sport generally among tv station owners. It's become an ever-growing practice for club owners to collectively decide at anni conclaves (such as the one recently past) to up the number of night baseball games. Now here's the chronic ill in all sports-tv relationships. Telecasters still realizing the great bread-and-butter potential of such events, are taking complete schedules or as much off a team's lineup as can be gotten, regardless of the fact that it might be cutting into video grosses from regular nighttime programs. It could end up as a Frankenstein, and it currently indicates (among outlets which take baseball lock, stock and beerkeg for fearing of losing it), that management has little if any confidence in its ability to program its own stuff. Others have reportedly talked of not taking night baseball after this year, regardless of consequences.

Television doesn't seem to be taking public cognizance of it yet, but it seems to have adopted a sports stepchild all for itself. But such an ill-bred and sickly child. One might think it wasn't worth paying all the doctor bills for the few times the kid shows any effort to sustain itself. During 1954 boxing was playing to empty arenas and SRO tv sponsorship but a decreasing home viewing audience.

There are innumerable ulcerous examples. The major sports seem as bereft of sympathy as they accuse video of being. For such excesses of video's homage they offer mostly contumely in return. Tv's ulcers are mostly from the disdain sports manifest by being so unpredictable. What video really needs is a sport genuinely all its own. Something like mumbly-peg. Nobody's ever heard of a mumbly-peg promotor or star who ever objected to tv's so-called deleterious effect on the b.o., or who wanted $100,000 (and got it) to throw his pen knife.

Hope Springs Eternal In Chi TV Breast as Origination Center

By FARRELL DAVISSON

Chicago.

Again it's the same old lament: "Maybe things will perk up this new year." That's the Windy City theme song of the lads with a vested interest in additional network television output from the midwest centre.

There's an edge of urgency to the wishful thinking about the future because the past year saw a further decline in Chi contributions along the electronic Main Stem. Not only was there a net loss in the number of shows bearing the Chi label during the course of the year but much of the intra-family infighting with the New York headquartered moguls was more a holding action than an offensive.

Taking the positive side first, anticipation that the upcoming year may mark a slight turning of the tide is not without foundation. While the major preoccupations of the four tv stations are concerned with programming and selling at the local level, the top Chi brass, particularly at the three network-owned operations, has not given up on their arguments for more web assignments. The pleas are based on both economic and prestige reasons. And most of the pitches are angled toward the daylight hours where it's figured the Windy City facilities and talent manpower can be best put to work.

NBC's Chi $ Mileage

Take the NBC-TV manoeuvers as an example. Off the track record established in the soaper field by "Hawkins Falls" the past three seasons, Ben Park and his network crew are still slugging away on their "sell" job for the Chi branch. Working with the WNBQ business department, the pitch here is that it makes sound dollars and pennies sense to get the maximum possible programming mileage out of the Windy City plant. In other words, the claims have it, it's just good business to pro-rate the Chi NBC-TV overhead over additional volume. And with the tele chains getting more and more cost conscious, the accountants-backed approach may ring the bell.

The ABC-TV adjunct here may well figure more prominently in the national scheme of things in the future, especially when and if the web decides to make a major invasion into the daylight hours. Although it has yet to catch fire sponsorshipwise, ABC's initial daytime entry, "Breakfast Club" originates here and was originally projected as the early morning anchor for further hausfrau-angled ventures.

But the real significance of Chi ABC's network future lies in the close working relationship between the web's overall veep John Mitchell and WBKB veep Sterling (Red) Quinlan. It was this combination that signed on Burr Tillstrom when NBC-TV dropped his "Kukla, Fran & Ollie." Show now goes out to some 35 affiliates under a program service setup. Pair also engaged Francois Pope's "Creative Cookery," now a daily ABC-TV co-op.

It's known that Quinlan has network ambitions for some of his WBKB daytime strips. And it's considered a certainty that should ABC decide to take a crack at extensive daytime programming, his plant will be called on for product.

Another Chi tele topper hoping to be cut in for a piece of the national pie, is CBS veepee H. Leslie Atlass who has taken personel command of WBBM-TV now that the hassle with Zenith Radio over the rights to Channel 2 has been resolved. The timetable in this instance hinges on the tv conversion of the Chi Arena which CBS purchased at Atlass' instigation a year ago. Work is expected to get underway shortly on the new studios which when completed will give the CBS boys further ammunition for more web chores.

Even more concrete evidence that '55 may see the reversal of the downbeat trend in Windy City video activities is being provided in an allied area—telefilm production. The town long since has become a major source of celluloid tv commercials and expansion into the vidpix sweepstakes is considered a logical development.

Kling Films, for example, is rapidly activating its elaborate new Washington St. plant with a major project already before the cameras and several others in the final blueprint stage. Already underway as an outside package is the "Eddy Arnold Time" series of 26 half-hours and Kling veepee Fred Niles has at least two other house properties ready for launching.

Also in the go-ahead stage is a project to film a series of daytime serials being put together by producer Alan Fishburn, scripter Bess Flynn and Dallas Jones, of the film studio bearing his name.

Despite the careful optimism of those who see hopeful signs for the future, the "show-me" boys are still to be convinced. They point to the so-called renaissance at NBC-TV which saw two new shows launched this past season—the Sunday afternoon "Out On the Farm" and the "Time To Live" soaper. Neither survived the year. They also point out that the NBC shows still around—"Zoo Parade," "Mr. Wizard," "Hawkins Falls" and "Ding Dong School"—all were started at least three seasons ago.

Other casualties were the revival of "The Stand Accused" courtroom drama produced by WGN-TV for DuMont and the same web's "Down You Go" which was moved to New York when Western Union took over sponsorship last month.

Although it's had its own station here for nearly two years, the sole Chi CBS current identity is "Welcome Travelers" which was inherited from NBC. Besides the aforementioned ABC shows, "Super Circus" continues as the networks Sunday winner.

Don't Commit Suicide If You Aren't Network

By RALPH M. COHN
(Screen Gems)

To a tv film producing and distribution company like Screen Gems, the nicest thing that can happen is to sell one of our shows to a sponsor who has a good network time franchise.

Ralph Cohn

So far, we have been fortunate enough to have four programs on the networks, more than any other equally integrated independent company in this hectic business. They are "Ford Theatre" on NBC, "Father Knows Best" and "Captain Midnight" on CBS and "Rin Tin Tin" on ABC.

Getting a network time franchise is great but failure to get one is no reason to despair. Remember, there is such a thing as a national sale which in many cases can be as good or better than certain network deals. For two years we have been producing "The Big Playback" for Ethyl which is distributed nationally. This program is seen in almost 60 major markets in the country, its rating is excellent, and its cost per thousand very satisfactory, yet not one frame has ever been transmitted by coaxial cable or microwave relay.

Just recently we arranged to produce a drama series for Falstaff Brewing Co. for spot distribution in more than 40 markets. To many advertisers a national spot deal is much better than a network setup. Falstaff is an excellent example. They can concentrate their television advertising expenditures in the localities where their product has its principle distribution, and if and when their distribution pattern changes they can add or subtract markets to fit.

I believe more advertisers should investigate the possibility of buying film shows on a national or large regional basis for placement on what we call "the fifth network." They can tailor-make their own "fifth network," choosing their own markets and time spots, and retaining the freedom to move their shows when more advantageous time slots become available.

One ingredient that is absolutely necessary to insure the success of this more daring concept of doing business is a heavy publicity and promotion campaign on the order of what a theatrical motion picture company puts on for its top pictures. This should be started on a city by city basis, geared to the individual time slots in each city, and aimed at the specific local audiences in the cities where the program is seen. After all, a national exploitation campaign is nothing more than the sum total of all the local campaigns.

When a new television program opens in a city it should have had a tremendous advance campaign so that it gets off to a rousing good start. In addition, a followup campaign should be carried out so that no one will, or can, forget the program is on the air. By using tried and true motion picture techniques this can be done.

One of the major problems in covering the nation effectively by way of national spot has been the problem of clearing good time on important stations.

From our experience in syndication, we know that key stations throughout the country are praying for an opportunity to prove what a top flight film program can do against network competition. They can become a part of the team bringing good entertainment to the public in their market, rather than a mere transmission belt, and besides they can keep more of the advertisers time costs.

With the rapid growth of top-flight film production and distribution, stations throughout the country will be more and more willing to clear good time for national spot advertisers.

I'm all in favor of getting the network sale for many reasons but let's not overlook that increasingly important national spot sale.

FROM ALL OF US

By ROBERT M. WEITMAN
(V.P. In Charge of ABC-TV Programming & Talent)

There are some people who say that good things come in bunches. Then you have those people who are equally as firm in their opinion that good things are quite exclusive. I go along on both of those, to a degree. For instance, the two-party system of American politics is a lot better than the one-party gimmick of some parts of this world we live in. But I bristle when exponents of the "two networks are enough" school-of-thought begin their harangue.

I believe that there is enough room in the living rooms of America for all of the television channels that can deliver top-quality entertainment.

There is one basic, incontrovertible factor to be considered, when you can deliver something new, something fresh to the tv screens of America, you are going to gain an audience.

ABC's new Disneyland show is a good concrete example of what I mean.

Week after week the Trendex figures show Disneyland away ahead of any other show on the air during the same period. Furthermore, the reports say that Disneyland boosted the sets-in-use for its Wednesday 7:30-8:30 period.

"Boosted the sets-in-use . . .?" Sure enough, says Trendex. Well how about that? Lots and lots of people—a goodly number of substantial, thinking people—were jolted by those reports on Disneyland. Right along the impression was that just about every set that could be tuned in was functioning at that precious hour—and along comes that ABC newcomer and warms the cockles of the hearts of electric company stockholders by getting even more electric current into use!

Look, Ma, No Gimmicks

That's what I keep saying all of the time! There's enough room for all of us on the tv screens of the nation. Sure those other swell programs are on the air against us—in a period they felt they were supreme. Sure they are deeply established and have viewers who never fail to tune them in regularly. But sure enough there is room (lots of room!) on the tv dials of America to tune in ABC.

We at ABC didn't use any hokus-pokus. We haven't invented a gimmick to stre-e-etch the number of sets-in-use. No sir, we just gave the folks at home that kind of show that they wanted to see. We give them other shows, too, that are basic entertainment in the every day living of Americans. We give them Walter Winchell and Ozzie and Harriet and the U.S. Steel Hour and Danny Thomas and John Daly and the Elgin Hour and the Stu Erwins and Ray Bolger and—oh, we give them what they want to see, not what we think they should see.

We're not stopping with those shows or with any of the other fine programs on our schedule. We're going to keep coming up with the kind of entertainment America wants to see on its television set. We're going to buttress and embellish what we have, and we're going to continue to get our share of the viewing audiences—even if we have to stretch those sets-in-use even further than we have already.

Why not? There's enough room for all of us networks in the living rooms of America.

For Better Or For Worse, Britain Takes The Comm'l Plunge In TV

By HAROLD MYERS

London.

Commercial television in Britain! It was regarded as impossible five years ago; it seemed improbable less than three years ago. Yet the blueprints have now been passed and the new network will be on the air in the fall of this year.

Note one important difference. This is commercial television, a typical product of British compromise, which bears little resemblance to sponsored tv on the American pattern. Under this system the advertisers are denied the right to plan and produce their own programs. Their function is restricted to buying air time and to the production of their own commercials.

In other words, the British system of television advertising largely follows the pattern created by the press. Just in the way in which an advertiser is entitled to buy the space in the press and prepare his own copy without having any right to influence the editorial content of the paper, so will he be allowed to buy "space" on the air without predetermining the entertainment to be offered.

To American advertising interests who have played the predominant role in the expansion of sponsored television throughout the United States, this compromise may seem a little strange. But in order to assess it correctly, there has to be full understanding of the British prejudice to this form of entertainment. When the Television Bill was being piloted through Parliament, the Govt. was confronted with tremendous opposition pressure, not only from the Labor Party, but from leaders of the church, education, the trade union movements and other segments of public life. They were dead against any measure which would give advertisers control of a television network. So along came this alternative which still accepts the principle of allowing advertisements on the television screen, but keeps the essential job of programming away from the advertisers who foot the bill.

Objectives of TV Act

In view of the fundamental difference between the American and British systems, an explanation of the principal objects of the Television Act, under which the new commercial web will operate, may be of value. In Parliament the Postmaster General or his deputy, the Assistant Postmaster General, will be responsible to MPs for answering questions on the conduct of the new commercial stations. The PMG in turn delegates responsibility to the Independent Television Authority, a panel headed by Sir Kenneth Clarke and which includes a dozen parttime officials. The ITA operates with its own fulltime staff and the head of the organization, Sir Robert Fraser, was recruited from the Central Office of Information, the Govt's main propaganda agency.

As the first stage of development provides for the setting up of three commercial stations, one in London and others in Birmingham and Manchester, the Act provides authority for the ITA to delegate the responsibility for the programming to commercial interests with sufficient technical and financial resources. These program contractors will individually have the job of providing a minimum of 35 hours of programming from each station. It will be their function to finance the programs, to pay for transmitters and studios and they will have to recoup their investments from the amounts they can charge advertisers How much they will have to pay for transmission rights, for their program costs and their studios has yet to be determined between them and the ITA.

For the operation of the initial three stations, the ITA, in the latter part of last year, named four program directors. Broadcast Relay Services in association with Associated Newspapers, will beam from the London outlet every Monday to Friday. Sidney L. Bernstein, the Granada Theatres boss, will be on the air from the Manchester station also on week days only. The Associated Broadcasting Development Co., headed by Norman Collins, has the Birmingham station from Monday to Friday, plus weekend time from London. And finally, the Maurice Winnick-Kemsley Newspapers setup, has weekend time at both Birmingham and Manchester stations.

It was the announcement of the programming setup that sparked a new political rumpus which, for a time at any rate, caused a certain amount of disquiet in political and press circles. There were charges of political bias against the Govt. and the ITA for giving program concessions to two powerful right-wing newspaper groups, but when the issue was eventually challenged in the House of Commons the Govt. got its necessary vote on confidence and the appointments are now being confirmed.

Throughout the protracted legislation, the Labor Party have been uncompromising in their opposition, and they now find themselves in an embarrassing, if not invidious position. They've threatened to undo the legislation if they are returned to power and that threat is still official Labor policy. At one time it might have affected the situation, but today no-one takes it very seriously. After all, it's one thing to unscramble an Act of Parliament which provided for the nationalization of road transport; it's another kettle of fish when it comes to interfering with an entertainment medium which directly affect many millions of electors. At best, the Labor Party could not hope for more than the introduction of a more stringent control than that provided under the present Act.

In its advocacy of a commercial television service the Govt. emphasized that the time had come to end the BBC monopoly and with that sentiment they found growing support throughout the country. But indirectly, they have created a new and urgent problem. Where's the necessary skilled and technical labor to come from? Only in the BBC-TV studios are there to be found directors, producers, writers and cameramen with television experience and, not surprisingly, the commercial interests are raiding this State organization for key personnel. This is creating finance problems for the BBC who are being compelled to offer cash inducements to retain top staffers, and as their budget is determined by revenue from licenses, they haven't much of a margin. It's becoming increasingly apparent that in the main the new stations will have to recruit much of their talent from people with expert knowledge in other branches of show biz and to train a new corps of television experts.

By the time the commercial webs go on the air, there will be upwards of 4,000,000 receivers in Britain, of which more than 3,000,000 will be in the reception areas. Of this latter total, just about 1,000,000 will have been made to receive the alternative station and the others will have to be adapted at a cost of somewhere between $20-$40 per set. Some of the older receivers may not lend themselves to adaptation. In any event, this may create a serious bottleneck and may deny many viewers an opportunity of receiving the alternative programs for some time after they are on the air.

Once the initial stations in London, Birmingham and Manchester are functioning, the ITA will hasten its plans to extend the web to other parts of the country. New stations are planned at the rate of two to three a year and it's reckoned that by the end of this decade about 90% of the country will be blanketed by the commercial system.

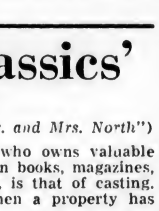
To what extent the new stations will be in the market for American programs is still in doubt. One thing, however, is certain. If there are any signs of a preponderance of American programs, the trade union movement will renew and increase its clamor for a protective quota.

Casting The 'Classics'

By JOHN W. LOVETON

(Producer of "Topper," "Scattergood Baines," "Mr. and Mrs. North")

One of the problems that beset the producer who owns valuable properties which have already found an audience in books, magazines, films, the theatre, and other entertainment media, is that of casting. Always difficult, casting becomes doubly hard when a property has achieved some measure of popularity before it is converted into a television series. Often mere chance may place the right personality for the right role before your eyes, but this is preceded by weeks and months of anxiety and soul-searching.



John W. Loveton

I first encountered this problem when transferring "Mr. And Mrs. North" to the television screen. These roles had already been created for three different media—the stage, the screen, and radio—in addition to winning a wide audience among mystery book fans. The problem was to find two people to play Pam and Jerry who could not only satisfy this "preestablished" audience but would also appeal to a completely new tv audience who had not already encountered them in one of their previous incarnations.

I was considering this problem when one night my wife insisted I accompany her to an ANTA production of Shaw's "Getting Married." There, before my very eyes, stood the Pam North I was looking for—in the person of beautiful and vivacious Barbara Britton. Richard Denning seemed a perfect match-mate to her personality as Jerry North.

Casting "Topper" for television proved to even more of a problem, for here the screen performances were particularly good and still vividly lived in audience's minds.

It isn't often that one is called upon to cast two attractive ghosts, but that is exactly what we needed in "Topper," in addition to performers who could play comedy and be vivacious. Anne Jeffreys and Bob Sterling were the answer to our problem since they were then appearing as a bright, polished young couple in their own nightclub act.

In casting the role of Cosmo Topper it was apparent that we needed a deft comedian, one who was well experienced in sophisticated comedy. A few years before we started "Topper" I had seen Leo G. Carroli in "The Late George Apley" on Broadway. In addition to his many other stage and motion picture performances, his portrayal of the proper Bostonian, I felt, was conclusive evidence that he would be our answer to Cosmo Topper.

While making the first "North" series, I had encountered Lee Patrick—and the role of Henrietta Topper was perhaps the easiest of all to cast, since I had already decided that Lee's fine comic talent would bring to this key role the scatterbrained insouciance it required. And who else could have played the dog Neil but "Buck"—the son of one of the most famous dogs in moviedom—still remembered for his performance in "Call of the Wild."

When it came to casting my production, "Scattergood Baines," however, I decided to pull a switch. I wanted a young actor to portray the role, so the plot was altered to make television's "Scattergood" the nephew of the original "Scattergood." Taking such a chance with a valuable property seemed risky at first—until I saw the rushes of Will Rogers, Jr. in the role. Then I knew that again my hunch had paid off—for Will Rogers, Jr. is "Scattergood," down to his ngertips.

The independent producer must be many things—businessman, script editor, production manager, casting director, ad infinitum. And among them all not the least important of these is the role of assistant to Ralph Acton, my casting director.

Man, Your Ubiety Is Crazy

By ROBERT A. SCHMID

(Veepée, Mutual Broadcasting System)

Of course you know what "ubiety" means, but I'll refresh your memory. I quote from Webster who defines it as: "the abstract quality of being in position." It can be used in sentences like "In order to protect my ubiety, *you* have to go!

However, I would like to use the word to point out that radio has ubiety that it hasn't even used yet. Radio is in position everywhere. It's in the kitchen with Dinah, up in Mabel's room, out in the Ford with Fred, and down in the dungeon with Fairchild, jr.

Up until a recent scientific advance known as t v n, nobody bothered to count the ubiquitous radio audience. They (we) were content to count telephones, living rooms or warm vacuum tubes. The radio industry had the largest collection of warm tubes in the country. But now we are pleased to announce that Mutual, for one, has discovered *people*. We've discovered that warm human beings make hotter prospects than warm radio tubes.

We asked a research man named Jim Ward to send out a crew of nosy characters and find out who these people were, what they were doing, where they were doing it and when. The results are known as the MBS-Ward Survey of Daily Living Habits. I won't say that the results are as interesting as the Kinsey Report, but honest, it's the only radio survey ever banned in Boston.

We got so much information that we don't even know what it all is, but we're working on it. It's the most useful dope that advertisers have ever been able to get from any medium including spiritualists. Now it's possible to tell where the audience is in any given 15-minute period throughout the waking hours. We know when most women are in the kitchen for instance. We know what they're doing in the kitchen — when they're cleaning, preparing food, eating, or just listening.

Now let's take an advertiser (and don't think we won't). Let's say he manufactures PURP, the lavender detergent that gets c'othes whiter than whiter than whiter than white. Let's also assume that he would like to sell it. To whom? Well not to Angelus Bleem who runs the cigar store. That is, he'd *like* to sell it to Angelus, but he knows that Angelus will use very little of it. He knows that his best market consists of ladies who do their own laundry. So he picks a kind of show that will appeal to said ladies. Next question: When? Well now —he can get the biggest audience with a large tv show at night. It will cost the most amount of money but it's the biggest audience. He can see it now. There are all those homemakers sitting in the living room relaxing after a hard day's work.

But wait a minute. If they're in the living room relaxing, are they as interested in PURP as they might be when they're working in the kitchen and are concerned with the problem of laundry? Hardly. And let's face it, the tv set ain't in the kitchen, but most of the gals *are* in the morning when they do most of the housework. Our little old survey proves it. It even shows when most of them are in there and what they're doing. Listening to the radio is one thing they're doing. Although they can be, and generally are, doing something else at the same time—like washing clothes.

Now, let's take another advertiser (this is fun). He sells BLIP, a small gadget that goes on your spark plugs and gives you more power than Con Edison. Who will buy BLIP? Not the lady in the kitchen. The average woman, if there is such a thing, believes that automobiles are run by small rodents on a treadmill. The stalwart male will buy BLIP and when will he be interested? In the evening when he has his hand curled around a deep-dish bourbon?

Not really. He is going to be most receptive when the family jalopy has just been passed by James Melton in a Baker Electric on Route 7. It's when his mind is on automobiles that he is a really prime prospect worth 10 sedentary Morrises in their Morris chairs. And we know when and how to nail these characters.

The whole thing is really quite simple. It's just an extension of the Einstein theory of the space-time continuum. A woman is not the same in one space, at one time as she might be in another. In the morning and in the kitchen she is a good customer for grocery story items. At night she is transformed into a different type—a mink buyer for instance. It can be illustrated in the familiar formula: W+K+R equals $2.

The man in the auto is a completely different character in the automobile than in the living room.

How do you reach them when their minds are on your business? It ain't tv. Only 1% of the tv sets are in kitchens and they're mostly covered with flour. No tv sets are in autos. The answer is of course, radio.

Radio has Ubiety. No other medium can make that statement. Radio tags around after the customer like a hungry cocker spaniel. And it's just as appealing.

One Who Loved

Continued from page 102

ker was brought to the Workshop to demonstrate animal mimickry. CBS mimeo again cried that Reis was "on his toes with excitement" and added that "Everybody connected with the Workshop goes around in that peculiarly thrilling frame of mind that artists and scientists feel when they think themselves constantly on the border of a new discovery." The great high-water mark of the early Workship came when Archibald MacLeish's verse drama, "The Fall of the City," was produced. But anything went with Reis, including Orson Welles as Hamlet.

Skeptics decried Reis in vain. Their sarcasm was wasted when they inquired when Reis had patented the board fade or the echo chamber. What had he proved when he had a kangaroo box a man? Where was the significance of Reis' demonstration of nine kinds of radio silence—all alike?

Airs on a Shoestring

For about a year and a half Reis, subject to only the frustration of what he regarded as CBS management's "stinginess," did pretty much as he pleased. Probably nobody has ever enjoyed so long a time of conditions approximately carte blanche, albeit on a shoestring. But in due course, the big romance with the proprietors of CBS faded. The record is blurred as to just what finally happened. Maybe it was just the lure of Hollywood salaries, although his intimates never believed that and always felt Reis was very unhappy his first two years in the film colony.

William B. Lewis, now president of Kenyon & Eckhardt agency, summarizes the impact of the Columbia Workshop in these words: "I doubt that any other radio venture came within a hundred city blocks of doing so much. It developed writers, adaptors, conductors, actors, directors; it pioneered entirely new techniques in sound effects and musical scores: it gave Columbia a reputation for progress and inventiveness that drew new talent like a magnet."

Reis was succeeded by various producers: William N. Robson, Earle McGill, Douglas Coulter, Davidson Taylor, Norman Corwin. The Workshop, the supposed summer filler of 1936 ran right up to Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. It was revived for one year after the war under the supervision of Robert J. Landry, who was taught a jolting lesson with respect to the foolhardiness of picking up a cherished myth born in non-unionized depression times, and trying to repeat the myth in a world changed beyond recognition. (The original Workshop had paid as little as $30 for some of its scripts). But even the revived Workshop of 1946 copped a Peabody Award. So CBS was still collecting on the publicity payoff.

The final comment on Irving Reis "talent" is this: over some 15 years in Hollywood, he directed a considerable number of well-regarded, and commercially successful features. There are those who believe his heart always remained in radio.

Irving Reis, aged 46, died in 1953 of cancer.

TV DISPLACES PIX NAMES IN SLICK MAGS

By KAY CAMPBELL

Two years ago a giant tremblor shook the national magazine fault from Topeka to Times Square. Policies and editors were bounced about like huge boulders from peaks to low levels and then pitch back to new heights or relegated to oblivion. The aftershocks are still rumbling, but during the cooling off period new formations emerged and some rich editorial lodes surfaced for freelancers.

Paradoxically, television, one of the primary causes of the disturbance, is the new field to be mined. Two years ago, an ever-increasing number of escapist readers ignored the newsstands in favor of watching the screen. Today, these same readers want to know all about the private lives of the 27-inch faves and more about the programs, producers and writers.

Two years ago, show biz pieces of any sort were a drug on the market. Today, Lucy, Groucho, Hope, Edwards, Linkletter and Webb are cover stories. Video names are on the preferred list of most editors. Even the conservative books which never recognized talent before are seeking articles and tieup dealing with personalities. Film stars who never emerged from the fans get top billing in the nationals following high tv ratings.

The editor of one of the largest mags (circulation-wise) says, "Television stars are more popular than movie players. So strictly from an editorial viewpoint it makes sense to have personality stories about them. Then of course, there's the added advantage—the tv star will help promote the issue of the magazine carrying the article. Films have never done a good job of helping magazines sell copies on the newsstands."

On the other hand, film companies have always carried substantial advertising in periodicals. Consequently some of the revenue-conscious books make a pitch for coin, as well as for plugs. If a thesp gets top billing on theatre marquees and on the webs, he's a cinch for minor as well as major breaks.

Dan Mich, promotionwise ed of McCall's states: "Our features on film and tv personalities have run just about even this year."

Woody Wirsig, of Woman's Home Companion, has placed the emphasis on teie profiles, but has revamped the review section to display the pix covered to better advantage. Barbara Britton ("Mrs. North"), Art Linkletter, Ralph Edwards, Dick Powell, Gale Storm and Dinah Shore are among those featured in '54. A profile on Bill Bendix is in the works.

From How-To To Escapism

Two years ago the big switch was to how-to-do-it articles. Only a handful of national mags were holdouts and the betting was two-to-one that they'd fall in line or fall by the wayside. Plagued by circulation slumps, many fell in line; other fell right out again. Names, formats and organizations were changed overnight.

Then, like many a hoss race, the unexpected happened. Suddenly the paying customers were not solely concerned with improving themselves, their children and their surroundings, they craved entertainment too. One long shot crossed the tape with a flourish. Namely, Cosmopolitan.

'It doesn't have a chance," one Hearst ed told this reporter, "it doesn't fit into today's pattern."

Good Housekeeping, which for several years was out-of-bounds for personality pieces, is definitely in the market for them now. Frank Sinatra, the editor of VARIETY, Dinah Shore, and numerous others have been profiled recently.

Better Homes and Gardens, with 3,000,000 circulation, wouldn't have been less interested in personalities—until '54. Now, Bob Jones, managing ed, states, "We will meet competitive prices for such stories as the Bob Hope serial which ran in the Satevepost." Dennis Day, Bill Bendix, Fibber McGee made headlines in recent issues and Linkletter and Walt Disney are skedded for future copies.

Some names are a natural for all of the biggies and for the mavericks, too.

Ralph Edwards hit McCall's in December '53, Woman's Home Companion, January '54, Cosmopolitan, February '54, Lifetime Living and Reader's Digest, June '54, in addition to numerous other breaks. Farm Journal, Pageant and Coronet have skedded articles on "This Is Your Life." And an ultra-conservative book, Capper's Farmer, with nearly 2,000,000 circulation, has made a promotional tieup with this program slated for March 14.

Dick Powell has made numerous cover stories; ditto Groucho Marx and Guy Madison. Eve Marie Saint, who starred in "On the Waterfront," but is better known as a tv star was profiled in Life, Look, Collier's, This Week, Parade and Pageant. Ray Bolger made Life, Coronet, Pageant and numerous others. Dinah Shore broke into print in Look, Life, Good Housekeeping, Woman's Home Companion, McCall's, Coronet, Parade and Better Living. And Jack Webb was featured in This Week, McCall's, Look and the Satevepost within a period of two weeks. Focus, Brief, Life, Argosy and several other books featured "Dragnet."

The Lucy stories were legion. Linkletter photo-finished with articles dealing with his program, his home, his family and his hobbies in nearly every national magazine.

Liberace, with no network to guide him, broke into the pages of Coronet, Parade, and a score of other slicks.

Roy Rogers and Dale Evans had a big fan mag following while under contract to Republic, but with their debut on NBC they became grist for the slick mills. Last year's pasteup in their scrapbook included National Geographic, Liberty, This Week, Time, Parade, Blue Book, The American, Country Gentleman and Life. The future lineup lists McCall's, Look, and Christian Herald.

In the pitch for circulation, The American added a how-to-do-it section while Better Living, a point-of-sales book, has turned its lead stories over to TVers. Country Gentleman first changed its format and then its name to Better Farming. Pathfinder became Town Journal.

West coaster Paul Smith took over the reins at Crowell Collier and Dan Mich remarried Look. John English moved from art director to managing ed at McCall's and Pete Dailey was imported from the coast to serve as article editor. Following a brief stint at Argosy and Brief, Bob Stein has been appointed feature ed of Redbook. When Ken Purdy moved from True to Argosy he transplanted several other members of the editorial staff. Doug Kennedy, ex-sports editor of Time, is new ed of True.

James Skardon switched to Cosmopolitan following Today's Woman foldup. Jim O'Connell is the new ed of Cavalier. Fred Sammis deserted McFadden to join Jerry Mason at Maco. Norman Lobsenz replaced Ted Irwin at Real. Ex-Esquire Martin Mayer is vacationing in Europe. And Leonard Wallace Robinson is the new senior ed at Coronet.

Some slicks (for the most part how-to's) folded before the ink was dry on their christening. Others, such as Curtis' TV Program Week and Time's Sports Illustrated have a bright future.

The publication picture is complex, but it appears that how-tos have had their heyday and the customer who's always right is looking for entertainment. Right now, tv is a natural.

'Howdy's' Coast Split

NBC-TV's "Howdy Doody" will be split off from network exposure as far as the Coast is concerned and seen via week-old kinnie there at 9:30 a.m. Coast time. New deal on the crossboarder will be launched Jan. 10.

Idea behind the move is to give NBC Pacific programming a solid block of kid shows mornings.

TELECHRON'S HOOPLA

Telechron bought two 10-minute segments of NBC Radio's New Year's Eve spread that kicked off at 11:30 and ran to 4 a.m. with pickups of orchs around the country plus other shenanigans.

Telechron was down for the 11:55 to 12:05 Times Square (N.Y.) hoopla and the 12:55 to 1:05 pickup from Chicago's Loop.

RUTH GILBERT (MAX)

JWT Has Busiest TV Casting Office (156 Live Plays)

J. Walter Thompson ad agency may have thought it was up to its ears in television dramatics during 1954 with 104 full hours for Kraft, equally divided between the NBC and ABC "TV Theatre."

Stepping in where even angels fear to tread, the commission house's '55 theatricals will give it a super status in the casting department, since Brillo is now in the drama arena with its "Star Tonight" half-hours. Thus, JWT will be responsible for the production of 156 plays during the calendar year (with the ABC Kraft version taken over by Pond's and Brillo the successor to the Sammy Kaye show). Thus, too, JWT's Lexington Ave. offices become an actor's paradise — with three-shows-a-week going and no repeats on thespian talent in a given seven-day span.

Conforming to the operation incepted and pioneered when the ad outfit put Kraft on tv in May, 1947, both the Kraft and Pond shows will have producers-directors at the helm working with a script sector headed by Ed Rice. In this way, one man takes the show from its conception until it's off the air. Operating for the Kraft NBC series are Maury Holland, Fielder Cook and Dick Dunlap. On Pond's side, the masterminds are Fred Carney, Paul Lammers and George Roy Hill. Harry Herrmann is script chief for the Brillo playshop, with overall helmers still to be named.

Casting for the drama threesome is via JWT's casting division headed by Marion Dougherty.

Syndicators Need Variation On a 'Spectacular' Theme

By ELY LANDAU
(President, National Telefilm Associates)

That the initial novelty of tv has worn off is evident to everyone in the industry.

As a syndicator I have, of course, been faced with the reality of the truism that nowadays you must come up with more than just "a series" or "a program" to do business. The competition is keen—among syndication firms, as well as among the television industry vs. other entertainment media.

For example, ask any motion picture theater operator, "how's business?", and he will respond that it's getting better. Why? The original fascination of sitting home and keeping eyes glued to the tv screen has somewhat worn off. People are not only becoming more selective about what they watch on tv, in addition, unless there is something happening to keep them home to watch their tv sets, they are rediscovering motion pictures, athletic events, dances, and other forms of entertainment which they had started to abandon seven or eight years ago when tv was starting to get big.

It's a good thing that this is happening. Why? Because the pressure is now upon the entire industry to raise its sights—to raise the quality of its programming, and to raise the quality of its thinking. Nowadays it takes a lot of thought, a lot of effort, and a lot of work for people in tv to meet the growing competition of the other media—the exact reverse of the situation which existed up until two years ago.

Time for Creativity

And so, the time is now to become creative. The time is now to come up with ideas and gimmicks to attract TViewer attention—to keep people home in their living rooms to watch programming and to more advertisers a run for their money.

Basically, the networks seem to have been attacking this problem with "spectaculars," experiments with color.

However, at the moment syndicators have not completely awakened to the fact that they, too, must get into the act and start thinking and planning for the future.

Perhaps this is because business in tv film sales is good and is getting better. But it is my philosophy that the time is now to think ahead of the day after tomorrow and prepare for the day when the mere fact that your program is filmed will not be a sufficient inducement to the public or to a buyer.

It was with this thought in mind that our own firm created the "TV Tic Tac Toe" contest, wherein we have raised over $1,000,000 in merchandise and cash prizes to be given away at the local level.

Sure, it's a gimmick — it's a gimmick to help local stations raise their overall ratings. The lure is $1,000,000, which is bound to keep people at home with their attention focused on their tv sets. More viewers mean higher ratings, higher ratings mean revenue to the station and-yes—to the producers and distributors of programs.

And here, I believe, is the path syndicators must follow now and in the future. We've got to stop thinking in terms of the income we will derive from our products. We must, instead, think of the problems of the stations with whom we are dealing, and develop plans which will help the stations enjoy maximum benefits from not only programming which they buy from us, but from the aspect of the entire station operation, as well.

Until now syndicators have been able to present an argument which went something like this:

"Our programs are on film — which means that they give the producers greater flexibility. They are not limited to studios, but can use the entire world as a setting. Moreover, because we have left 'open' spots in our films for the insertion of the local sponsor's sales message, our programming is even more flexible, because it gives stations and sponsors the opportunity to select the best possible time slot on any given day. What's more, the quality of the film is so good that not only can't the viewer tell the difference, instead filmed shows generally are showing up higher in ratings than the non-filmed shows. Furthermore, all the top stars -who have other activities to keep them busy and don't want to be tied down to a commitment which would require their presence in a 'live' studio on a certain time of a certain day—are now begging to go on film, with the result that we, the syndicators, are able to offer you top shows, featuring top stars, top directors, top writers, and top-everything else which you — Mr. Local Sponsor — can use to buck the competition of 'live' national programming."

Now, however, syndicators must offer more. Today, syndicators must point the way to the local stations to new and better means of creating excitement over their programming schedules. In a sense, every syndicator is bucking the competition of "spectaculars" and colorcasts.

All of which means that the syndicators must develop "spectaculars" of their own—gimmicks which will help local stations — whether they be affiliates or non-affiliates — to grab off local headlines and create a new mad rush to TVreceivers.

What's more, the syndicators must show the local stations how to make maximum use of such gimmicks, and must provide the stations not only with programming, but with the tools of promotion, publicity, and showmanship.

It's not as hard as it sounds.

Owed To a Writer

If you can keep your rating while others about you lose theirs . . .
If you can smile in Lindy's while others succumb to their fears . . .
If you don't have to use applause cards to get the public's cheers . . .
Why don't you blame THAT on your writers?

If you have no difficulty getting an untroubled night's rest . . .
If even the sponsor—and his wife—seem mightily impressed . . .
If by John Crosby and Jack Gould and Ben Gross you've been blessed . . .
Why don't you blame THAT on your writers?

That would be a nice gesture,
A human thing, done decently . . .
But who the hell are writers—
And what have they done for you recently?

If your shoes are too tight, and your plate doesn't fit . . .
If you can't get passes for the town's latest hit . . .
If your brother-in-law borrows ten, and then won't remit . . .
THAT you blame on your writers!

If your kid smears crayon on your living room wall . . .
If your horse is far behind at the final call . . .
If the weather's Summer when the calendar's Fall . . .
THAT you blame on your writers!

O, Outstanding Television Personality, grow up!
Some day, those 'unnecessary' writers may not show up . . .
You'll look around and they won't be there—
And you'll be as dead as the unfunny air!

Say a kind word to your writers, throw us a bone—
Writing Man cannot live by ulcers alone.

C. W.

Mutual Kicks Off Co-op Sports Sked Jan. 11

Mutual Broadcasting has fixed Jan. 11 as starting date of its nighttime sports schedule. And as web sports director Paul Jonas' plans progress it shapes that out-of-town arenas, in addition to Madison Square Garden and St. Nicholas Arena in N.Y., will be used (according to "wherever there are events of national interest"). Show will be sold co-op.

Sports lineup will run from three to six nights weekly from Jan. 11 through late March, this as a prelude to possible night baseball programming during spring and summer. It will comprise pro and college basketball, hockey, five Garden track meets and boxing, with Mutual airtimes being roughly 9:15 p.m. weekdays and 7:30 p.m. weekends.

More top performers in entertainment and business stand behind our microphone than anywhere else in radio. And as a logical result, the biggest audiences are tuned to the CBS

Radio Network

RED-HOT and READY

LAUGHS! STARS! SONGS!

Dazzling MUSICAL REVUES!

Something different and exciting every week . . .

to capture the most responsive audience in TV history! With Cantor alone, the show would be terrific! Add music, girls, dancers, starlets and guest stars like Brian Aherne, Don DeFore, Pat Crowley and many more, and the series is absolutely irresistible! Here indeed is a most magnificent triumph in TV entertainment!

Hilarious COMEDY STORIES!

ELABORATE! BIG! LAVISH!

WITH EDDIE CANTOR

YOUR STAR, YOUR HOST, YOUR PRODUCER!

MUSIC...

all special arrangements by DAVID ROSE

(of "Holiday for Strings" fame)

to make sales sizzle for you!

ZIV's

GLORIOUS NEW TV EXTRAVAGANZA

"THE EDDIE CANTOR COMEDY THEATRE"

HURRY! Capitalize on the Cantor name and fame NOW before your market is closed.

WALTER
WINCHELL
for American Safety Razor Corporation

BOB
CROSBY
SHOW
for The S.O.S. Company

THEY GET TO THE

WESTINGHOUSE
STUDIO ONE
for Westinghouse Electric Corporation

BEST OF
BROADWAY
for Westinghouse Electric Corporation

BIG TOWN
for Lever Brothers

CLIMAX!
for Chrysler Corporation

ARTHUR
GODFREY
for Pepsodent, Denison Lever Bros.

HALLS OF IVY
for National Biscuit Company

DEATH VALLEY DAYS
for Pacific Coast Borax Company

DISNEYLAND
for Derby Foods, Inc.

HEARTH OF AMERICA

Every week, every one of the 30,400,000 U. S. families with TV sets* welcome into their homes one or more of these fine network programs (and the products they sell for McCann-Erickson clients).

**Our Research people said: "To be accurate make it 29,200,000. Some people didn't watch any TV last week."*

McCANN-ERICKSON, INC. | *Advertising*
for today's markets

New York · Boston · Cleveland · Detroit · Louisville · Chicago
Houston · Dallas · Portland · Los Angeles · San Francisco

SHOWER OF STARS
for Chrysler Corporation

IT'S A GREAT LIFE
for Chrysler Division

IMOGENE COCA SHOW
for The S.O.S. Company

GARRY MOORE SHOW
for Swift & Company

Congratulations *from*

Weiss & Geller, Inc.

Chicago • 400 North Michigan Avenue
New York • 6 East 45th Street
Beverly Hills • 9533 Brighton Way

On Television

*Arthur Godfrey & His Friends
**Tony Martin
*Place the Face
*Going Hollywood—Mitzi Green
**People Are Funny—Art Linkletter
*Dollar A Second—Jan Murray
**Garry Moore Show
*Bob Crosby Show
*Arthur Godfrey Time
**Valiant Lady

On Radio

**Frank Sinatra Show
*Our Miss Brooks—Eve Arden
*Arthur Godfrey Time
**People Are Funny—Art Linkletter
*Nora Drake
*Stella Dallas
**Corliss Archer
*One Man's Family

**Producing Agency*
***Participating Agency*

TOPS IN CHICAGO

In Radio

WGN delivers results. This has been proven again and again.

In October, 1954, Fairbanks, Morse & Co. ran 40 station break announcements in one day. Results from WGN and WGN Only:

375 sump pumps sold at $65 to $140 each! Every dewatering pump sold at double that amount!

Many electric motors sold!

Three standby generators sold!

Obtained five new dealers!

Results such as this can be yours on WGN—reaching more homes per week than any other Chicago station.

WGN

Chicago 11
Illinois
50,000 Watts
720
On Your Dial

Eastern Sales Office: 220 E. 42nd Street, New York 17, N. Y. for New York City, Philadelphia and Boston
Representatives: Geo. P. Hollingbery Co.
Los Angeles—411 W. 5th Street • New York—500 5th Avenue • Atlanta—223 Peachtree Street
Chicago—307 N. Michigan Avenue • San Francisco—625 Market Street

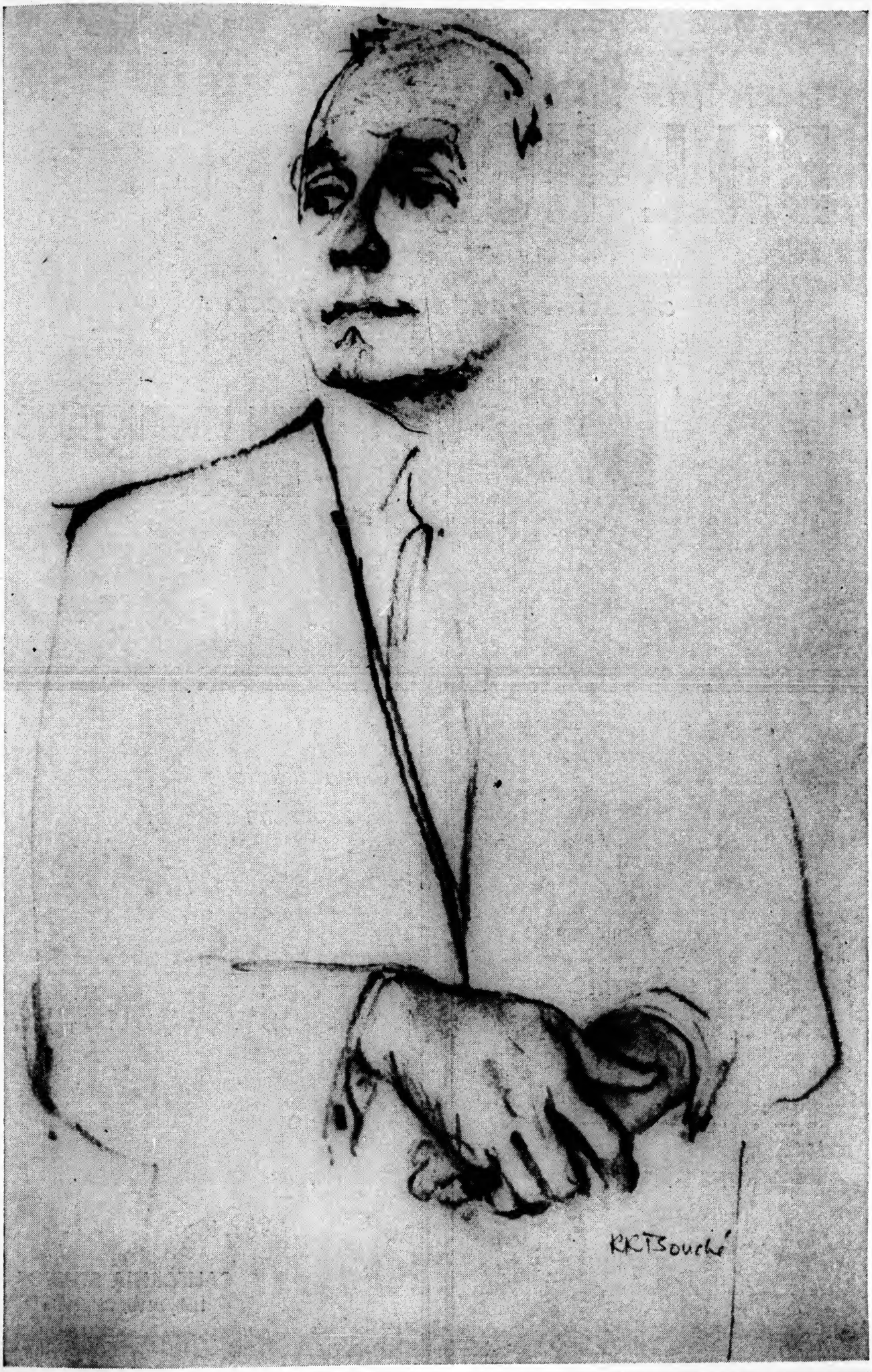
In Television

WGN-TV delivers top audiences for locally sponsored programs in Chicago.

When you buy a program on WGN-TV you're in the best of company. Locally sponsored programs include Badge 714, Racket Squad, Meet Corliss Archer, Life with Riley, I Led 3 Lives, Liberace, Boston Blackie, The Lone Wolf, Mr. and Mrs. North, Inner Sanctum, Florian Zabach.

For best availabilities, proof of results for locally sponsored programs—check WGN-TV first in Chicago.

The Chicago Tribune Television Station


R.K.T.Bourke

BILL HOBIN

associate producer—director

MAX LIEBMAN PRODUCTIONS
NBC-TV

Jaime del Valle

"THE LINEUP"

Congratulations
From the Staff of

GROSS-KRASNE, INC.

CALIFORNIA STUDIOS
Hollywood, California

Best Wishes on Your 49th Anniversary

Milton Berle

Congratulations To VARIETY,

...my sincere thanks to you and my sponsors

BUD COLLYER

TELEVISION

"BEAT THE CLOCK"
for
Sylvania Electric Corp.
WCBS-TV

"FEATHER YOUR NEST"
for
Colgate-Palmolive-Peet
WRCA-TV

RADIO

"BREAK THE BANK"
for
Miles Laboratories
WRCA

FELIX JACKSON

PRODUCER

STUDIO ONE
CBS

STEVE ALLEN

Management
JULES L. GREEN

Public Relations
ARTHUR CANTOR

There are a lot of people—at the networks and stations throughout the country—who have helped make 1954 our greatest year. To all of them . . .

Thanks from K&E

Broadcasting is people. We know, because television and radio have become an increasingly important part of our business. We know, too, that the crises, the last-minute changes, the king-size growing pains make it all too easy to forget the human side of things. And that is why we at K&E want to say good and loud—at the top of our greatest TV-Radio year—thank you to the many, many people at the networks and independent stations who have helped us. Thanks for your co-operation. Thanks for your patience. Thanks for your good nature. *Thanks for everything.*

A list of current K&E television and radio work . . .

PROGRAM	NETWORK	K & E CLIENT SPONSOR
TV		
Ed Sullivan's Toast of the Town	CBS	Lincoln-Mercury Dealers
Caesar's Hour—Sid Caesar	NBC	Radio Corporation of America
Producers' Showcase	NBC	Radio Corporation of America and Ford Motor Company
Your Hit Parade	NBC	Hudnut Sales Company, Inc.
The Jackie Gleason Show	CBS	Schick Incorporated
Professional Football	Dumont	Schick Incorporated
Rin-Tin-Tin	ABC	National Biscuit Company
Sherlock Holmes	NBC	Chase National Bank
Howdy Doody	NBC	The Welch Grape Juice Company, Inc.
Guy Lombardo	NBC	Lincoln-Mercury Dealers, N. Y.

Spot programs for the following clients—American Maize Products Co.; Beech-Nut Packing Co.; Coats & Clark, Inc.; The Gorham Co.; Hudnut Sales Co., Inc.; Lincoln-Mercury Dealers; Pepperidge Farm, Inc.; Radio Corporation of America; Welch Grape Juice Co., Inc.

RADIO		
Rin-Tin-Tin	MBS	National Biscuit Company
The Great Gildersleeve	NBC	Radio Corporation of America
Roadshow	NBC	Radio Corporation of America
Weekend	NBC	Radio Corporation of America
Second Chance	NBC	Radio Corporation of America
It Pays to be Married	NBC	Radio Corporation of America

Spot programs for the following clients—American Maize Products Co.; Beech-Nut Packing Co.; Chase National Bank; Equitable Life Assurance Society; Lincoln-Mercury Dealers; The Mennen Co.; Quaker State Oil Refining Corp.; Radio Corporation of America.

KENYON & ECKHARDT Inc.

NEW YORK ATLANTA CHICAGO DETROIT HOLLYWOOD PHILADELPHIA SAN FRANCISCO TORONTO

GREETINGS

MEL ALLEN

"Thanks to everyone for everything"

BILL NIMMO

Announcer For

SCHICK ELECTRIC RAZORS *(3 Years)*

PABST BLUE RIBBON *(3 Years)*

THANKS to These Two Great Sponsors With Whom My Association Has Been a Pleasure

GREETINGS to JACKIE GLEASON, a great guy whom I love working with.

Per. Mgt.: CHARLES CONAWAY 510 Madison Ave., New York

JACK LESCOULIE

Announcer for

JACKIE GLEASON — DAVE GARROWAY — BUICK

DU MONT MEANS BUSINESS

GOOD BUSINESS

TODAY
and in the FUTURE

DU MONT®
TELEVISION NETWORK

515 MADISON AVENUE
NEW YORK 22, N. Y.

JESS KIMMEL

With Another Pleased Client

New Assignment and Change of Locale—Executive Director, *Workshop of Motion Picture Drama*, Universal-International Pictures, Universal City, Calif.

barry nelson

"my favorite husband"
cbs-tv saturday evening

MARIAN and JIM JORDAN

FIBBER McGEE AND MOLLY

20th YEAR — NBC RADIO

GOODSON-TODMAN PRODUCTIONS

Creative Programming for Radio, Television and Television Film

41 East 57th Street
New York 22, N. Y.

449 South Beverly Drive
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West Coast Representative
HARRIS KATLEMAN

MARK GOODSON BILL TODMAN

Charles Sanford

Musical Director

of

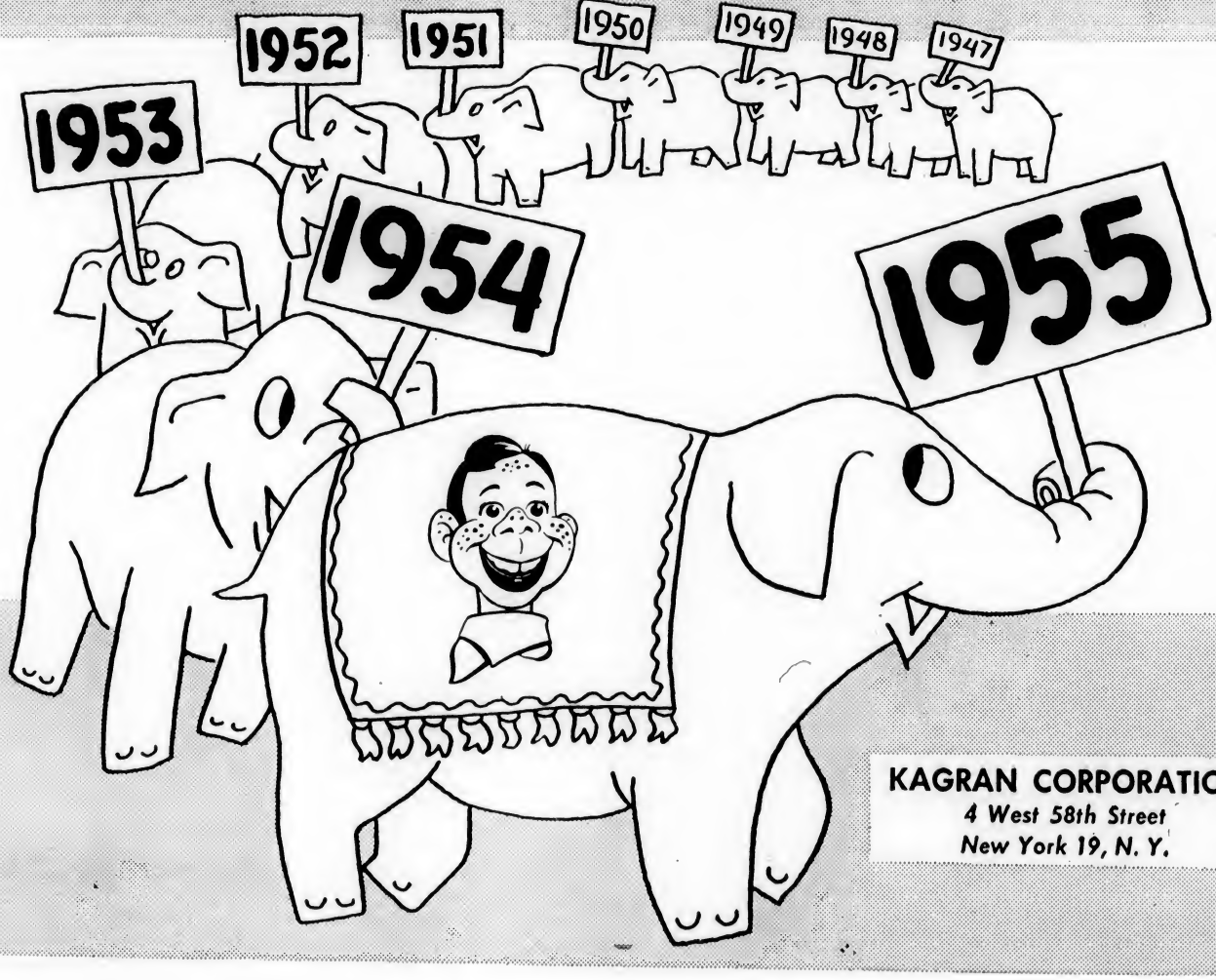
"MAX LIEBMAN

Presents

TWENTY 90-MINUTE

LIVE 'COLOR SPECIALS' "

NBC Television



KAGRAN CORPORATION
4 West 58th Street
New York 19, N. Y.

Max Liebman

presents

twenty 90 minute live "color specials"

NBC TELEVISION

*Trendex 1954

**Nielsen Television Index January – October 1954

Network identification

In 1954 television again demonstrated that it was the most effective sales force in America by reaching larger audiences than any other medium of mass communications.

During 1954 the number of U. S. television homes increased to 32,500,000.

In 1954 the network identified by this symbol

. . . won the highest average ratings* of any broadcasting network—11% higher at night, 85% higher during the day

. . . broadcast the most popular* programs in television—an average of 6 of the top 10 at night, all of the top 10 during the day

. . . grew from 157 to 202 stations, while the number of stations carrying the average nighttime program increased by 44%

. . . reached its audiences at the lowest cost per thousand in network television**

. . . earned the largest investment ever committed to a single advertising medium.

Congratulations VARIETY

CHARLES MARTIN

PRODUCER—DIRECTOR—WRITER

NORMAN FELTON
Director
"Robert Montgomery presents"
FIFTH YEAR

SANDY BECKER

Television

THE AMERICAN TOBACCO THEATRE
Mondays—NBC

THE ARMSTRONG CIRCLE THEATRE
Tuesday—NBC

FIRST LOVE
for The Andrew Jergens Co. Monday-Friday NBC

Radio

YOUNG DR. MALONE Title Role
for JOY & CRISCO Monday-Friday CBS
(Radio-TV Mirror Award)
and speaking on RADIO and T.V. for
WILDROOT, CHASE & SANBORN COFFEE
FRANCO-AMERICAN SPAGHETTI
and ESSO EXTRA

BREAK THE BANK
for Miles Laboratories Monday-Friday NBC, MBS SU 7-5400

RALPH EDWARDS Also Produces

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES
Tuesday — NBC-TV
10 P.M. — E.S.T.

PLACE THE FACE
Saturday — NBC-TV
8:30 P.M. — E.S.T.

FUNNY BONERS
Saturday — NBC-TV
11 A.M. — E.S.T.

MASQUERADE PARTY

Television's Most Exciting Panel Game

for Remington Electric Shavers
and Esquire Shoe Polish

ABC, Coast to Coast

Wednesdays at 9 P.M., EST

WOLF PRODUCTIONS

BREAK THE BANK

Television's Leading Quiz Program

For Dodge Division-Chrysler Corp.

ABC, Coast to Coast

Sundays at 10 P.M., EST

WOLF ASSOCIATES, Inc.

420 Madison Avenue, New York

PLaza 5-2050

BERNARD GREEN

Composer — Conductor

Caesar's Hour

"Mister Peepers"

The United States Steel Hour
(Alternate Shows)

This is our kind of one-man agency

There's always *one man* at Y&R who has the basic responsibility for an account.

But these men call on a small army of heads to think up sound new ideas for a client's advertising . . . productive new solutions to his selling problems.

YOUNG & RUBICAM, INC. *Advertising*

New York • Chicago • Detroit • San Francisco • Los Angeles
Hollywood • Montreal • Toronto • Mexico City • London

Congratulations VARIETY

RUDY SCHRAGER

COMPOSER – CONDUCTOR

LUX RADIO THEATRE

LUX VIDEO THEATRE

NBC

LEVER BROS. — J. WALTER THOMPSON

RALPH LEVY

PRODUCER – DIRECTOR

CBS Television

WILBUR STARK • JERRY LAYTON, INC.

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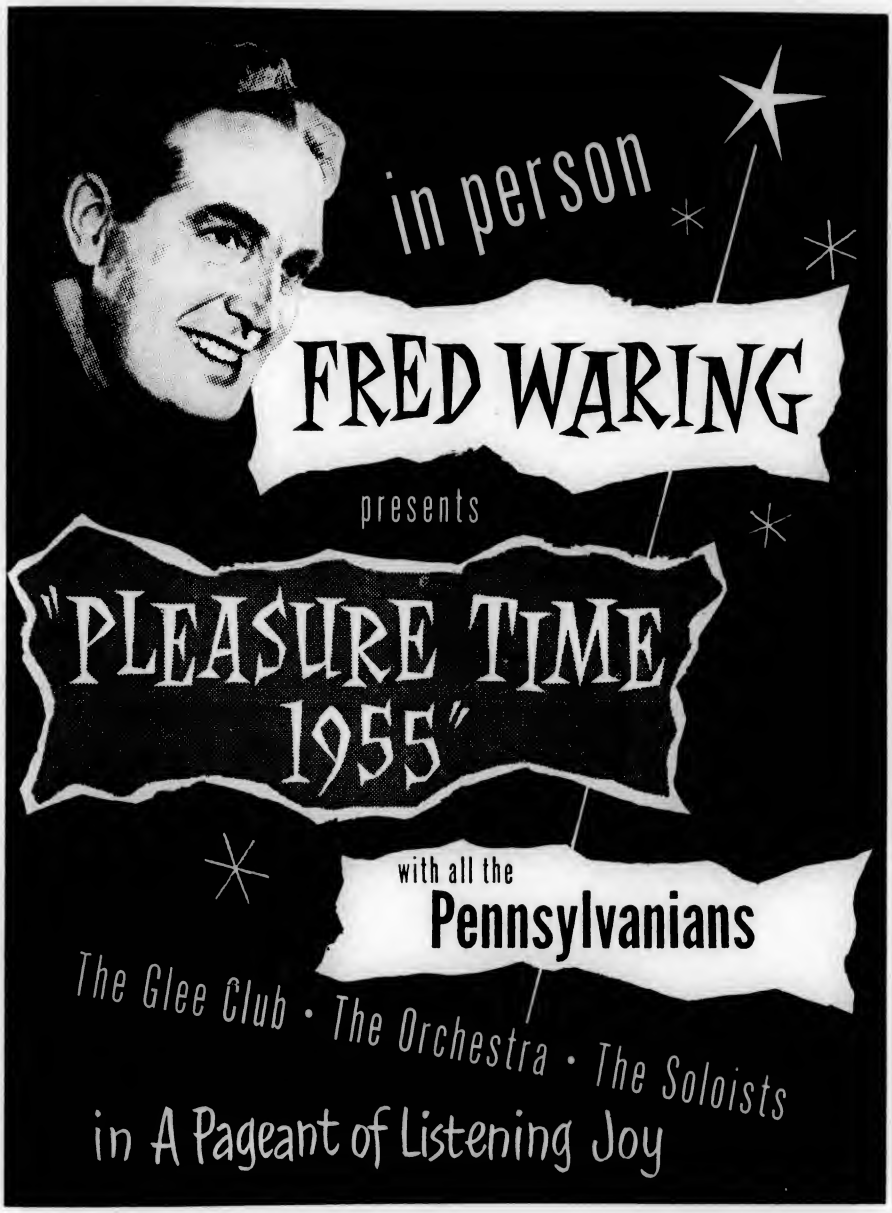
COLONEL HUMPHREY FLACK	TV	A WOMAN'S DECISION
LADIES' CHOICE	and	WHAT'S THE GAG?
THE SERGEANT AND THE LADY	or	AMAZING MRS. TUPPER
ROOKIE COP	RADIO	YOU BE THE JUDGE
STORY-FROM HOLLYWOOD		NEWSSTAND THEATRE

CURRENT

ROCKY KING, DETECTIVE	MODERN ROMANCES
Du Mont Television Network	NBC – TV ABC – Radio

ALL NEW – ALL WARING – ALL GREAT!



NOW ON COAST-TO-COAST TOUR

– 25,000 MILES – 200 CITIES –

PROUDLY PRESENTING

AN ENTIRELY NEW IDEA

IN MUSICAL THEATRE

Congratulations VARIETY

The Igor Cassini Show

11:20 to Midnight Sundays

WRCA-TV

Management: CATES-FORD PRODUCTIONS

CAROL CHARLIE

REED AND DOBSON

CAST THEIR VOTE

FOR

VARIETY

NICK CASTLE

Directed and Staged
For Night Club

MARTIN AND LEWIS
BETTY HUTTON
NANETTE FABRAY

DINAH SHORE
JOEL GREY
THE SKYLARKS

VAN JOHNSON
PATTY ANDREWS
ESTELITA

CHOREOGRAPHY
Motion Pictures
"Living It Up"
"Red Garters"
"The Big Top"
"The Eddy Foy Story"
Now in Production
"You're Too Young"

CHOREOGRAPHY
TV
The Bob Hope Shows
The Martin and Lewis Shows

SEASON'S GREETINGS

PROCKTER TELEVISION ENTERPRISES Inc.

JEAN MARTIN

Star of the

CHOCK FULL O'NUTS PROGRAM

WRCA — WCBS — WABC
SATURDAYS
11:15-11:35 P.M.

JACK CARSON

"A STAR IS BORN"
"PHFFFT"
"THIRD GIRL FROM THE RIGHT"

NBC-TV for Pontiac
Every 4th Friday

ALLYN EDWARDS

"THE ALLYN EDWARDS SHOW"

Monday to Friday, 6:35 to 9:30 A.M.
Saturday, 7:00 to 9:30 A.M.
WRCA

"THE JANE FROMAN SHOW"

CBS-TV Coast-to-Coast

MODERATOR
"ONE MINUTE PLEASE"

Dumont Television Network
9:30 to 10:00 P.M., Fridays

Direction: MCA

Warwick and Legler, Inc.

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NEW YORK • LOS ANGELES

DONALD O'CONNOR

MARY MARGARET McBRIDE

NBC: Full Radio Network

10:00 - 10:05 A.M., EST

Monday:
Q-TIPS, INC.

Tuesday:
Q-TIPS, INC.

Wednesday:
STAR-KIST Canned Food French Sardine Co., Inc.

Thursday:
GENERAL FOODS

Friday:
GENERAL FOODS

Saturday:
CALGON, INC.

Exclusive Management:
Estella Karn
49 West 45th St.
New York City

EARL WRIGHTSON

Singing Star

OF THE ROBERT Q. LEWIS RADIO AND TV SHOWS

Personal Management
JACK BERTELL
730 Fifth Avenue
New York City
Circle 5-7075

Rich man,
poor man,
beggarman,
thief—
Doctor,
lawyer,
merchant,
chief—

They live on the Pacific Coast—

They listen to

DON LEE RADIO

Justly proud of its achievement through more than 26 years of broadcasting to Pacific Coast audiences, the Don Lee Broadcasting System salutes the entertainment industry which has contributed so largely to its growth.

Starting in 1928 with a network and a plan, Don Lee grew consistently and rapidly to become the radio giant of the West . . . the only network with "point-of-purchase" penetration from stations within each of 45 important Pacific Coast markets, where today more than 16½ million people live and spend their money.

Yes, Don Lee IS Pacific Coast Radio--

the nation's greatest regional network

Mutual DON LEE RADIO

DON LEE BROADCASTING SYSTEM
Hollywood 28, California

Represented Nationally by H-R Representatives, Inc.

the "NEW LOOK" for TV . . .

JOHNNY
(DIOR)
OLSEN

Emcee . . . Commercial Announcer . . . Singer

Even "Warm-Ups"
(I Gotta Eat Too!)

★

Call Circle 7-7517

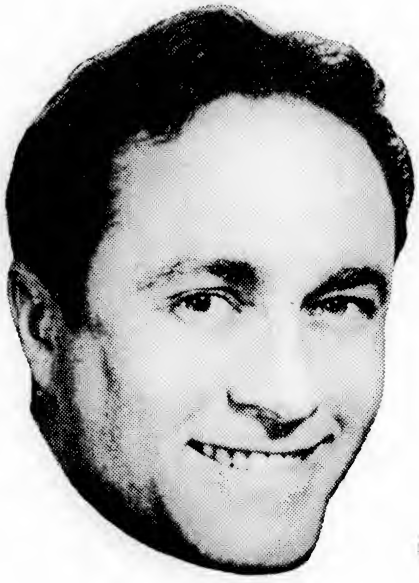
★

P.S.: Will Travel . . . and furnish own wardrobe.

CARL REINER

SID CAESAR'S HOUR

NBC-TV



HOWARD MORRIS

SID CAESAR'S HOUR

NBC-TV

SID CAESAR

GEORGE BURNS AND GRACIE ALLEN

CBS-TV

EVERY MONDAY

FOR

CARNATION EVAPORATED MILK and B. F. GOODRICH

CLAUDE KIRCHNER

SUPER CIRCUS

THE CLAUDE KIRCHNER SHOW • SCRUB CLUB

ABC-TV from Chicago

SEASON'S GREETINGS
TO ALL OUR FRIENDS

THE SKYLARKS

Our

Special Thanks

to

HUGO GRANATA

Personal Management

NICK CASTLE — DINAH SHORE

ROCKY CARR — MARTIN & LEWIS

WILLIAM MORRIS AGENCY

ON-TARGET TELEVISION

KUDNER AGENCY, INC.

NEW YORK DETROIT WASHINGTON SAN FRANCISCO

Greetings from Chicago

MISS FRANCES

"DING DONG SCHOOL"

NBC-TV

more
VARIETY
and
les lear

"WELCOME TRAVELERS"

starring

TOMMY BARTLETT

for

8th Year PROCTER & GAMBLE CBS TV

Les Lear Productions
HOTEL SHERMAN, CHICAGO

MONART PRODUCTIONS

ARTHUR ALSBERG NATE MONASTER

Now Casting

"MY SEVENTY SONS"

and

"GRANDPA, THE GENERAL"

U. S. STEEL HOUR

"TV theatre at its best —"

VARIETY

produced by

The Theatre Guild

International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employes and Moving Picture Machine Operators of the United States and Canada

Affiliated with the American Federation of Labor

Representing Craftsmen Employed in Production, Distribution and Exhibition in the Entertainment Field

RICHARD F. WALSH
International President

HARLAND HOLMDEN
General Secretary-Treasurer

SUITE 1900
1270 AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS NEW YORK 20, N. Y.

GOODMAN
and JANE
ACE

"Commercial's on"

—a Sarra commercial, of course!

People are looking at Sarra Commercials for

A&P
Braun's Bread
Bromo-Quinine
Bulova
Cat-Tex
Chase National Bank
Chrysler Airtemp
Coors Beer
Cunard Steamship Lines
Helene Curtis
Duncan Hines Cake Mixes
Eastman Kodak
Evinrude Motors
Hoffman Mixers
Hostess Cup Cakes
Jergens Lotion
Kraft
Lucky Strike Cigarettes
Lux Beauty Soap
Lux Liquid Detergent
Pabst Blue Ribbon Beer
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I Love "Lucy"

and

I

Love

* "WILLY" *

THE JUNE HAVOC SHOW

A Desilu Production

* Even If I Do Produce It

BILL SPIER

JACKSON BECK

ANNOUNCER

THE UNITED STATES STEEL HOUR
THE ELGIN HOUR

NARRATOR

THE SEARCH THAT NEVER ENDS
TOM CORBETT SPACE CADET

ACTOR

THE FBI IN PEACE AND WAR

RADIO TV FILMS

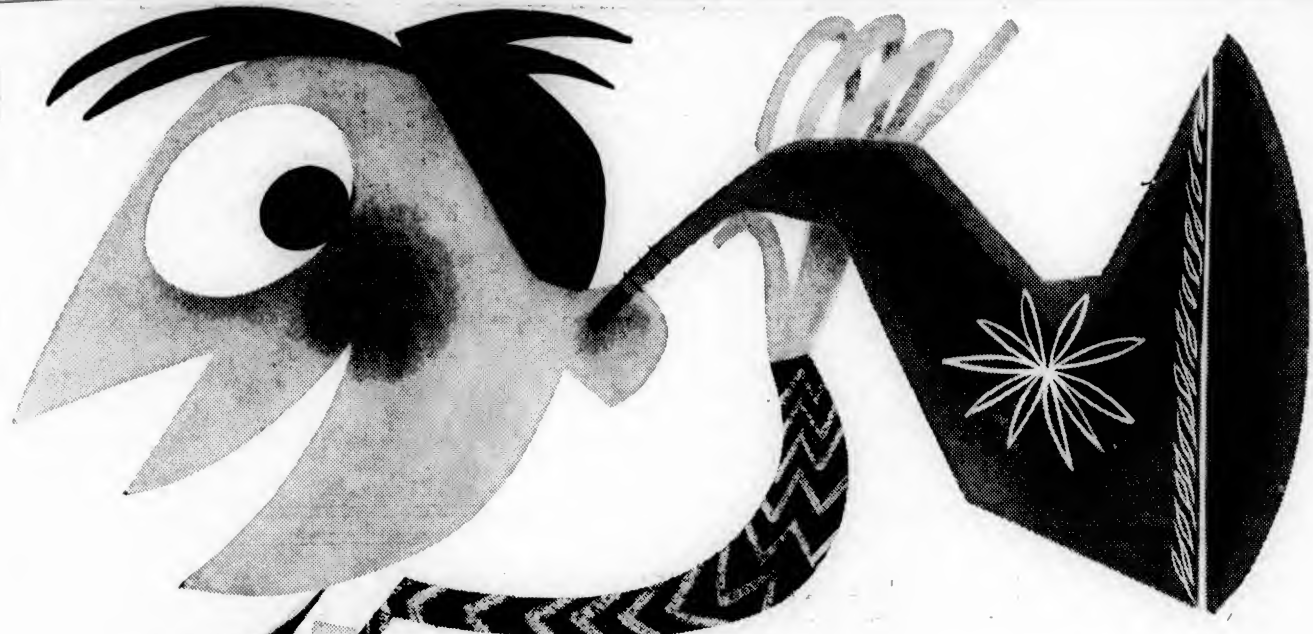
MUrray Hill 8-6600

Congratulations VARIETY

MITZI GREEN

TELEVISION

"So This Is Hollywood"



BBDO

NATIONAL RADIO-TELEVISION

TELEVISION

THE AMERICAN TOBACCO CO., INC.
Lucky Strike Cigarettes
"Private Secretary," starring Ann Sothern (Alternate Weeks)
"Robert Montgomery Presents— The American Tobacco Theatre" (Alternate Weeks)
"The Jack Benny Program" (Alternate Weeks)
"Your Hit Parade" (Alternate Weeks)

ARMSTRONG CORK COMPANY
Floor Covering, Building Material
"Armstrong's Circle Theatre"

CAMPBELL SOUP COMPANY
Campbell's Soups
"Dear Phoebe"
"Lassie"

DE SOTO-PLYMOUTH DEALERS OF AMERICA
"The Groucho Marx Show— You Bet Your Life"

E. I. DU PONT DE NEMOURS & CO. (INC.)
"Cavalcade of America"

GEMEX COMPANY
Watchbands
"The Stork Club"

GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY
"The General Electric Theatre"

GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY LAMP DIVISION
"The Jane Froman Show"

GENERAL MILLS, INC.
Betty Crocker Cake Mix
Robert Q. Lewis
"The Bob Crosby Show"

THE B. F. GOODRICH COMPANY
Life-Saver Tubeless Tires
"The George Burns & Gracie Allen Show" (Alternate Weeks)

LEVER BROTHERS COMPANY
Surf, All-Purpose Detergent
"Art Linkletter's House Party"

MINNESOTA MINING & MANUFACTURING CO.
Cellophane and miscellaneous tapes
"Arthur Godfrey Time"

U. S. STEEL CORPORATION
"United States Steel Hour" (Alternate Weeks)

RADIO

THE AMERICAN TOBACCO CO., INC.
Lucky Strike Cigarettes
"The Jack Benny Program"

DE SOTO-PLYMOUTH DEALERS OF AMERICA
"The Groucho Marx Show— You Bet Your Life"

GENERAL MILLS, INC.
Betty Crocker Cake Mix
"Whispering Streets"

LEVER BROTHERS COMPANY
Surf, All-Purpose Detergent
"Art Linkletter's House Party"

MINNESOTA MINING & MANUFACTURING CO.
Cellophane and miscellaneous tapes
"Arthur Godfrey Time"

BATTEN, BARTON, DURSTINE & OSBORN, INC.

NEW YORK · BOSTON · BUFFALO · CHICAGO · CLEVELAND · PITTSBURGH · MINNEAPOLIS
SAN FRANCISCO · HOLLYWOOD · LOS ANGELES · DETROIT · DALLAS · ATLANTA

BOB QUIGLEY

PRODUCER

"ON YOUR ACCOUNT"

CBS-TV

Compliments of the Season

ROBERT MERRILL

R.C.A. VICTOR RECORDS

METROPOLITAN OPERA

Management

MOE GALE

MARTIN GOODMAN PRODUCTIONS

65 West 54th Street

NEW YORK CITY

DOHERTY, CLIFFORD, STEERS & SHENFIELD, INC.

350 Fifth Avenue

New York 1, N. Y.

Disney and Friends hit the Top 10 . . . as expected

Excuse our bounce, but we can't help feeling good about the nifty Nielsen and the Top 10 position that DISNEYLAND has chalked up in its first few weeks.

Public and critical acclaim certainly corroborate the research measurements.

Of course, this comes as no great surprise. Whatever Disney touches turns to great entertainment; we knew we had a hit on our hands before the ink on the storyboards was dry. And wait, there's much more on the way.

We also feel chipper because this is just the latest . . . and most dramatic . . . step in our steady TV progress. DISNEYLAND is an example of what's new and different and worthwhile these days on ABC. An outstanding example, but hardly the only one.

© Walt Disney Productions—World Rights Reserved

ABC-TV means business *American Broadcasting Company*

"ETHEL AND ALBERT"

Starring

PEG LYNCH and ALAN BUNCE

PEG LYNCH
Writer

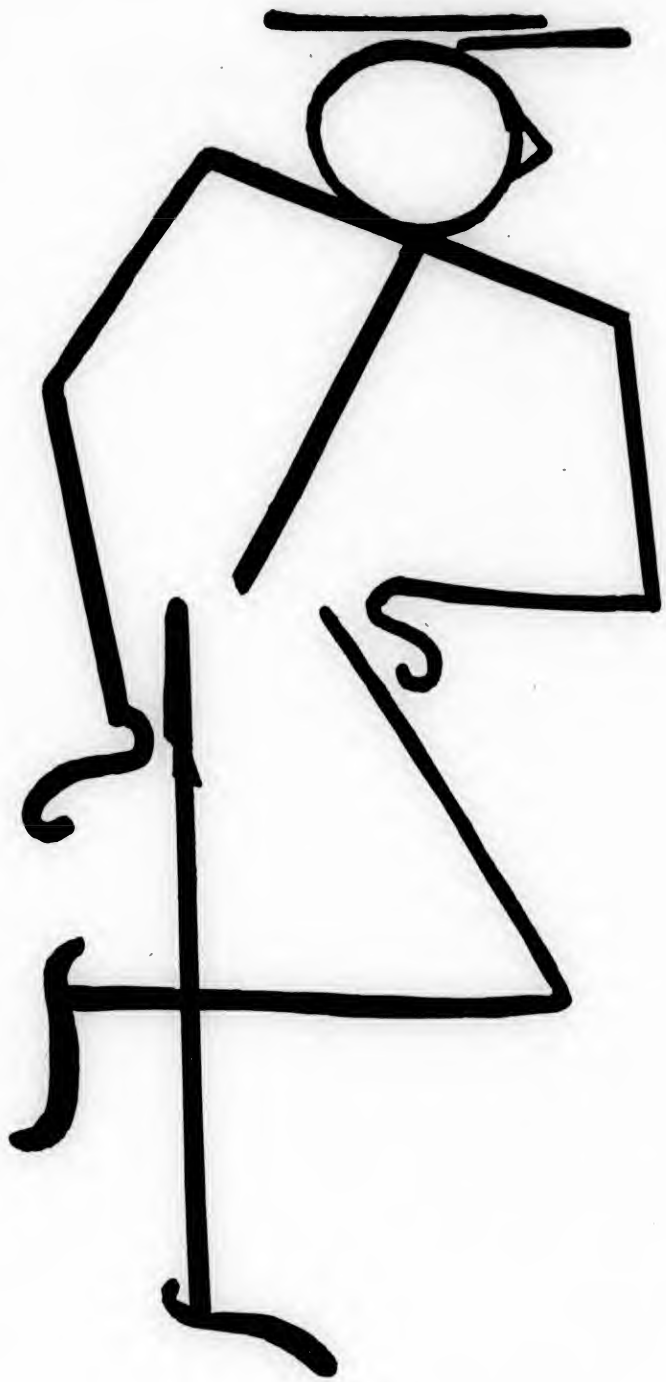
WALTER HART
Director

TODD RUSSELL

Sheldon Reynold's New Series
"SHERLOCK HOLMES"
for Chase National Bank
Mondays — 7-7:30 P.M., NBC-TV

JOE WILSON

"TELEVISION'S PIONEER SPORTSCASTER"
NBC, CHICAGO



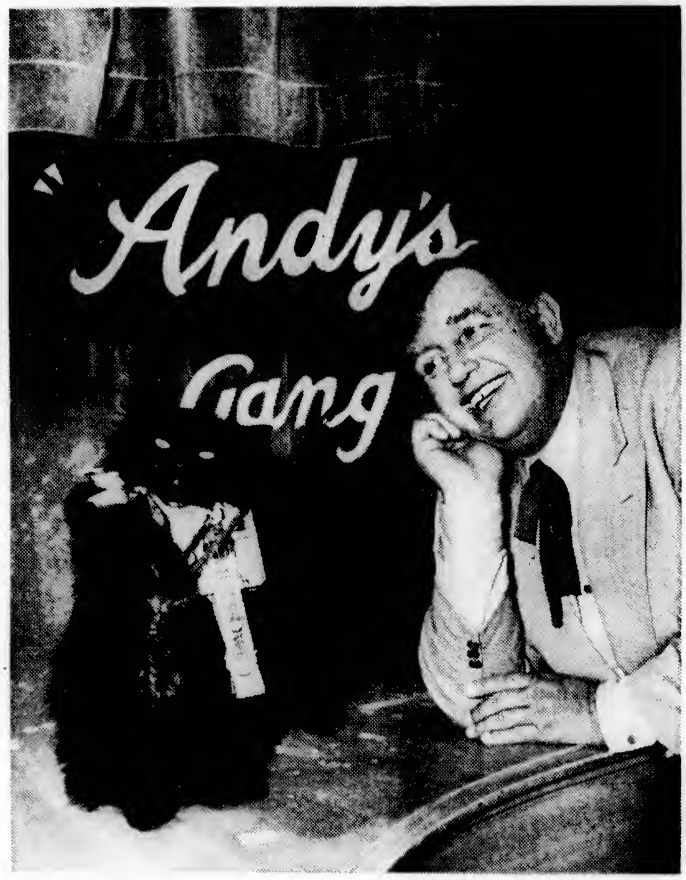
THE JACKIE GLEASON SHOW
CBS-TV

A JACKIE GLEASON ENTERPRISE PRODUCTION

BEST WISHES . . .

audrey meadows

Personal Management
VAL IRVING



MIDNIGHT and ANDY DEVINE

FRANK FERRIN

Announces the Forthcoming

"ANDY'S GANG"

Starring

ANDY DEVINE

(Formerly "Smilin' Ed's Gang")

With

Nino Marcel
Midnight

•

5th Year
for Brown Shoe Co.

Froggy the Gremlin
Squeaky

•

Saturdays
ABC-TV Network

A FRANK FERRIN PRODUCTION

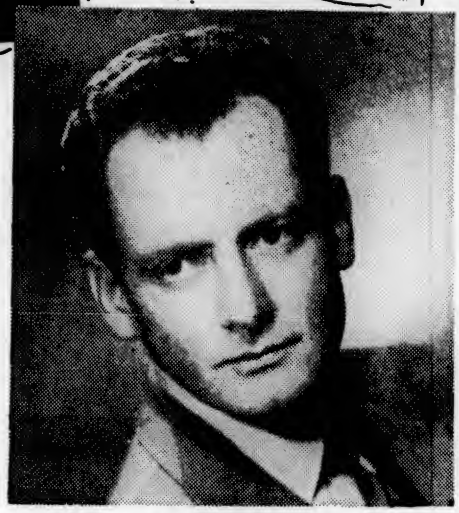
•

Happy Anniversary to VARIETY
from all of us . . .

ART CARNEY

JACKIE GLEASON SHOW, Saturdays, CBS-TV

Starring in "CLIMAX" — CBS-TV (January 6)



Personal Management
WILLIAM McCAFFREY

GERRY GROSS-NORMAN BAER

PRODUCTIONS

SAVOY PLAZA HOTEL
New York, New York
MU 8-8882

1680 North Vine Street
Hollywood 28, California
HO 2-6343

Press Relations:
PAUL W. BENSON

MOLLY PICON

Congratulations

VARIETY

and Best Wishes

to All of My Friends

Throughout the World

WARREN HULL

"STRIKE IT RICH"

These were the national television programs for the clients of Foote, Cone & Belding in 1954

ARMOUR AND COMPANY
Dial Soap–Dial Shampoo
George Gobel Show
Show of Shows
All-Star Revue
Martha Raye Show
Pride of the Family
Saturday Night Revue

BEATRICE FOODS COMPANY
Beatrice Foods, LaChoy
Sports for the Family
Today

BOURJOIS, INCORPORATED
Evening in Paris Perfume
Today

CALIFORNIA BREWING COMPANY
Gold Label Beer
The Star and the Story

FRIGIDAIRE DIVISION
GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION
Arthur Godfrey and His Friends
Arthur Godfrey Time
Red Skelton Revue

HALLMARK CARDS, INCORPORATED
The Hallmark Hall of Fame
Richard III
Macbeth
Amahl and the Night Visitors

INTERNATIONAL CELLUCOTTON PRODUCTS COMPANY
Kleenex
Arthur Godfrey Time

JACQUES KREISLER MFG. CORP.
Today
The Kate Smith Show

S. C. JOHNSON & SON, INC.
Carnu
Robert Montgomery Presents
Life with Father

LEVER BROTHERS COMPANY
Spry
Lux Video Theatre

LIEBMANN BREWERIES
Rheingold Extra Dry Beer
Douglas Fairbanks Presents

PAPER-MATE COMPANY, INC.
Paper-Mate Pens
People are Funny
The Imogene Coca Show
Trouble with Father

PERKINS PRODUCTS COMPANY
Kool-Aid
The Roy Rogers Show

WESTGATE-CALIFORNIA TUNA PACKING COMPANY
Liberace

1929

TONI GILMAN

"The first 25 are the toughest"

1955

★

Best Regards

from

Arthur Meyerhoff
& Company

★

SIGNATURE

MUSIC PRODUCTIONS

CREATORS and PRODUCERS

Of RADIO and T.V. COMMERCIALS

Musical - Straight - Jingles - Dramatic

WE WRITE
CREATE
ORIGINATE
PRODUCE
DELIVER

SPOTS that SELL . . .

At a Price Within Your Budget!

Some Signature Success Stories

AMAZO
BEECH-NUT GUM
CAMEO STOCKINGS
EXQUISITE FORM BRA
FLEETWOOD COFFEE
KELLOGG'S
KREUGER BEER
LINCOLN-MERCURY
M-G-M PICTURES
NABISCO SHREDDED WHEAT
NATIONAL PREMIUM BEER
RCA-VICTOR
SCRIPTO
TINTAIR
WELCH'S WINE
WESSON OIL

Complete Production Facilities . . . Live . . . Recorded . . . Film

We Also Put Words to Your Music, or Music to Your Words!

SIGNATURE **MUSIC, INC.**

521 Fifth Avenue, N. Y. 22, N. Y.
MUrray Hill 7-3080 HANK SYLVERN, *Musical Director*

Ken Nordine

Something new has been added—now recording for
VERSION RECORDS

Beryl Vaughan

P. S. Have You Heard Eddie Fisher's Latest RCA-Victor Recording?

The Kid's Got Another Hit!

DANNY THOMAS

"Make Room For Daddy"

ABC-TV

SPONSORED BY

The American Tobacco Co.

and

Dodge

(Division of Chrysler Corp.)

barry enright & friendly inc

667 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK 21, N. Y. TE 2-8600

BULLETIN BOARD

KTLA, channel 5, is recognized by the people in Southern California as the station which they can count on for progress and the finest in local entertainment. Wise advertisers have found that this public acceptance means greater sales power.

VARIETY — Radio—Television

KTLA COMES OFF WITH FLYING COLORS IN FIRST TRY AT TELEVISING IN TINT

Klaus Landsberg gave an invited audience its first look at KTLA color television Friday night and the critical consensus was both favorable and enthusiastic. It was generally agreed that the colorcast of "Western Varieties" was comparable in quality to some of the network Specs from the east and certainly a milestone in the history of the local station, first of the unaffiliated indies to "show its colors."

After the hour showing, Landsberg said that the Paramount station will also have a mobile color unit in Pasadena New Year's Day to cover the Rose parade. It likely will be the only color coverage of the parade as NBC, if its mobile trucks can be routed here from Brooklyn in time, will carry the Rose Bowl game in tint instead of the parade. There's some talk that the long haul across the country may be vetoed by NBC in favor of taking the Dallas Cotton Bowl game in tint. Prime objective of the network is to be the first to telecast a football game in color. Landsberg will cover the start of parade in black-and-white and repeat in color at the finish line.

Landsberg's chromatic display of the cowboy revue with two RCA color cameras shown on 10-inch Motorola receivers was sharply brilliant in the closeups but cloudy on the long shots and losing definition, which has also been a network problem. There seemed to be an occasional overlay of greens and yellows, which was said by Landsberg to have been due to the set control rather than in the transmission. On the monitors Landsberg said the picture was clear and sharp and that he was highly elated at the first exposure of his color program, with others to follow at weekly intervals. It is estimated that there are now 1,500 color sets in the L.A. signal area.

The gay and vivid colorings of the cowboy regalia brought out the bright qualities of the color lenses and splashed the western set with fast moving rainbowish hues. Performing in colorful garb under the emceeing of Doye O'Dell were such familiars to the hoedown set as Roscoe Ates, Spade Cooley, Eddie Dean, Eddie Cletro, Twin Tones, Y-Knot Twirlers, Gail Moser, Ricky Lane & Willie and Cheetah, the ape, who wasn't given the chance to steal the show.

KTLA
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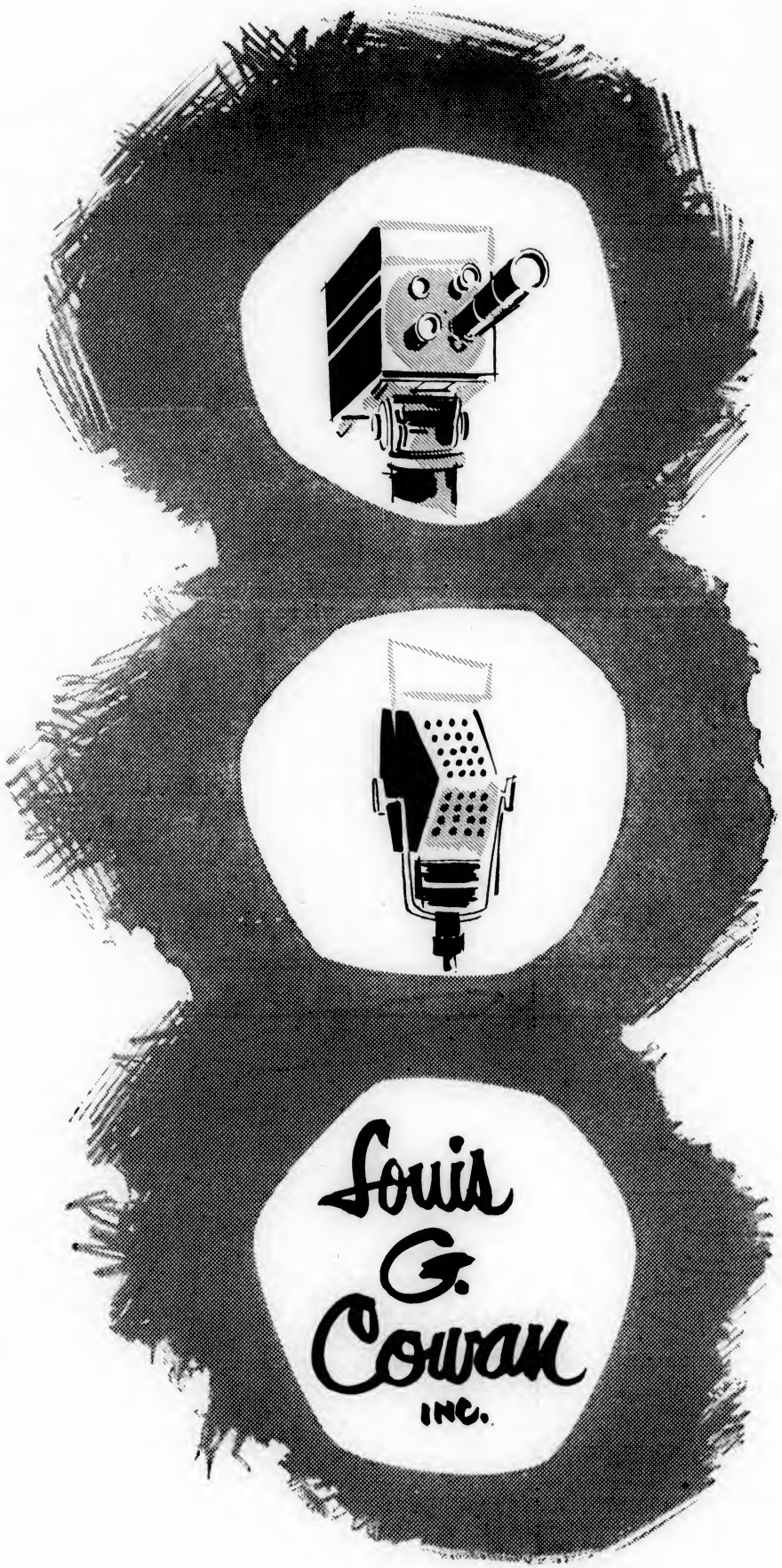

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from

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THE LORETTA YOUNG SHOW

WILLIAM SELF

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CBS, Chicago

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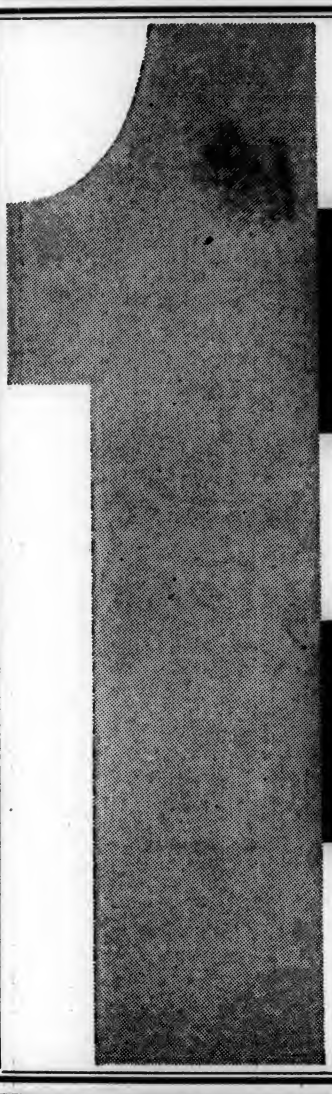

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Season's Greetings

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Season's Greetings

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Feast to your heart's content
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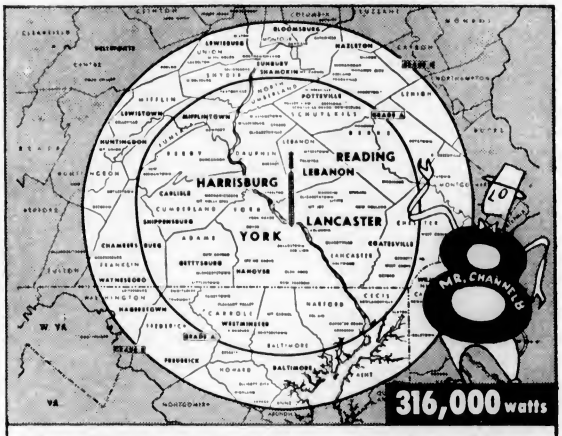

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Season's Greetings

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Director
clark jones

Associate Producer
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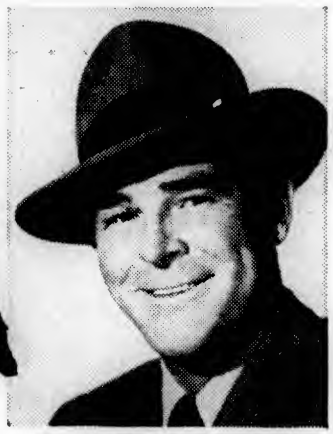
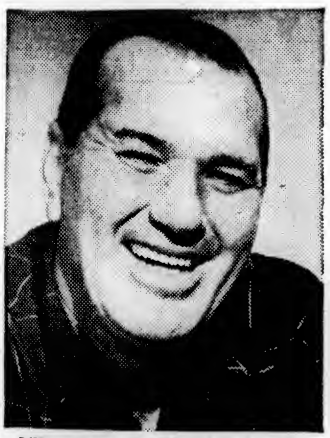
JUNE HAVOC—WILLY
CBS-TV for General Mills, Inc.

Satin OR HOMESPUN



ROD CAMERON—CITY DETECTIVE
Regional Spot TV
for The Falstaff Brewing Corp.



DIZZY DEAN—GAME OF THE WEEK
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There's no "formula" that D-F-S follows
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*ROBERT Q. LEWIS SHOW—The Best Foods, Inc.	CBS
CITY DETECTIVE—Falstaff Brewing Corporation	Regional Spot
GAME OF THE WEEK—Falstaff Brewing Corporation	ABC Regional
LONE RANGER—General Mills, Inc.	ABC and CBS
WILLY—JUNE HAVOC—General Mills, Inc.	CBS
VALIANT LADY—General Mills, Inc.	CBS
*IMOGENE COCA SHOW—Lewis-Howe Company	NBC
WELCOME TRAVELERS—The Procter & Gamble Co.	CBS
THE VISE—Sterling Drug, Inc.	ABC
SOLDIER PARADE—ARLENE FRANCIS—U. S. Army	ABC

RADIO

GAME OF THE DAY—Falstaff Brewing Corp.	MBS
TIME FOR BETTY CROCKER—General Mills, Inc.	ABC
LONE RANGER—General Mills, Inc.	ABC
WHISPERING STREETS—General Mills, Inc.	ABC
SILVER EAGLE—General Mills, Inc.	ABC
RIGHT TO HAPPINESS—The Procter & Gamble Co.	NBC
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from

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. . . and A Happy New Year to all
from Ginger and Eric

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"He is brittle in his appraisal . . .

"Interlarded with his frank vexations with the 15-and-2% craftsmen is much good humor attendant to his programs and the guests thereon. Then genuine affection for show biz is dominant.

"Allen is subjectively analytical, betimes caustic, but in the main entertaining. It's a compelling book which may bring some of the executive and sponsorship fraternity up short, as Allen sits in captious judgment on their peccadillos and ulcerous uncertainties, but it will never bore them. It is funny reading, and as such will enjoy a wide audience."

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Directed by

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Continuing the phenomenally successful syndicated adventure film series . . . top-rated in every market shown. It's the BIG family show. 26 exciting, All NEW, half-hour episodes combined with the original 26 episodes give you 52 half-hours of quality programming. Available . . . first run . . . in all markets.

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"MAMA"

FRIDAY NIGHTS AT 8:00 ON CHANNEL 2

PEGGY WOOD (Mama); JUDSON LAIRE (Papa);
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Produced by CAROL IRWIN

"December Bride"

Created by

Parke Levy

CORT STEEN

DIRECTOR

VOICE OF FIRESTONE

ABC-TV

Season's Greetings

TOM DUGGAN

ABC-TV, Chicago

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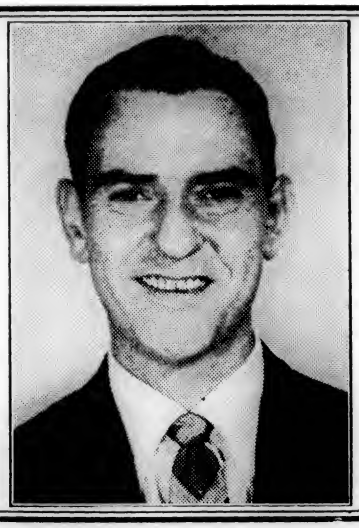

4th YEAR
"THE BIG PAYOFF"
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ANNOUNCING — ACTING

Represented by FRANK COOPER ASSOC.

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The ad is small—
But the thought is big
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Renewing their contracts year after year, these advertisers have proved the loyalty of WEVD's audience . . . it stays tuned to WEVD . . . it responds to quality . . . it has the means to buy.

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MCA BOSTON

MCA ATLANTA

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On the happy occasion of

THE BIG PAYOFF's Third Anniversary

WALT FRAMER says

Thanks to the team!

MOST TV shows—most good ones, that is—are born of basic, hard-earned ingredients . . . imagination, ideas, talent, diligent work—plus a vital element called experience. To the members of my team who've helped to provide those ingredients throughout the past years, I offer a sincere and hearty "Thank you!" "The Big Payoff" and its three successful years are a tribute to your individual efforts, carefully coordinated to create one of television's top audience participation shows!

Cordially,

Walt Framer

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During three successful years, "The Big Payoff" has been mighty active in playing Santa Claus to happy TV-conscious Americans. Our chief keeper of the tally sheets reports that we've managed to give away

- 104 mink coats
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When it comes to portraying Santa Claus on a lavish scale, "The Big Payoff" plays second fiddle to no one! And our proud birthday baby ranks tops in the success department, too. Rating-wise, this fast-moving audience-pleaser is right out in front, (15 million viewers daily) . . . with a matchless record of sales effectiveness. Now embarking on its fourth year, "The Big Payoff" looks forward to bigger and brighter accomplishments!

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TOAST OF THE TOWN
YOUR HIT PARADE
GUY LOMBARDO SHOW

Stage—

THE TENDER TRAP

Personal Management: AARON STEINER

PAUL TAUBMAN

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WINKY DINK AND YOU, CBS-TV
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Hi Peoples

Monday-Friday on CBS-RADIO Monday-Friday on NBC-TV

Everyday on CAPITOL RECORDS

Personal Management—CLIFFIE STONE *Publicity*—MICKEY FREEMAN

LANNY ROSS

"Good Radio Show . . . That's what Lanny Ross gives you on his weekday song and chatter sessions over WCBS (4:30 P.M.). He invests a ballad or love ditty with romantic fervor and what gives his program a special appeal is the feeling of friendly intimacy which pervades these periods. Furthermore, each show is built on a definite theme, which makes his singing all the more enjoyable. As long as there are performers such as Lanny, radio will not die."

BEN GROSS
N. Y. Daily News, Dec. 10.

Personal Direction: GENERAL ARTISTS CORP.

Syndication: Paradox of '55

Continued from page 101

more to make the sale and get the print there than that $10 covers. Yet, syndicators are doing it. Nor does the medium market price situation make sense — syndicators sell a major market at three or four times the price of the medium city when the latter's rate card often averages half that of the major.

Adding to these difficulties is the current market situation of supply and demand. Supply is overextended—there are literally hundreds of series in circulation, first-run and rerun, straight sales and library packages. Yet, demand, which boils down to available time in the nation's 245 markets, is at an all-time minimum.

In the face of these difficulties, it isn't strange to see the various devices to which syndicators have resorted during the past year in an effort to reach the black-ink level. There have been lots of new wrinkles, all of them designed to twist away from the rather black market situation. There was MPTV's spots-for-pix plan, under which the stations would make time available to MPTV in return for films, with MPTV then selling the time to a national sponsor and pocketing the coin. A slightly different twist was that of National Telefilm Associates, which is selling its complete library package at a cost-plus basis, the plus being a cut in any participations sold by the station for airing in the series. Sterling Drug sought to get off the hook with its "Mark Saber" films by giving them to the stations in return for free spots for Sterling products.

Distribs seeking to solve the cost problem came up with new formats for distribution. Charles Amory, a newcomer to television but a one-time veep of Pathe Labs, evolved the idea of a 200-man sales force via the employment of two companies whose chief business is the sale and production of commercials for theatres. He first organized this as Minot TV, and then MPTV's Matty Fox, whose syndication setup wasn't showing too satisfactory results, set a deal with Amory under which MPTV would act as a financing - releasing organization which would distribute through Minot and the two theatre-commercial outfits.

Still other ideas came to the fore—volume sales plans under which the distribs sold films on a multiple-run basis to stations, either for specified plays or unlimited use. Reasoning was that the distribs could get through a volume sale in a market what he couldn't get on a straight deal, and the station felt it was getting lots of programming at low per-show cost.

One answer to the pricing problem lies in cutting production costs instead of raising prices, and that field has been explored in more ways than one. There's been the evolution of the low-cost musical series, the use of more on-location shooting, the limitation on casts and extras. Newest wrinkle, however, was supplied by the Coast indie distributor, the TeeVee Co., which set up a deal with AFTRA, George Foley and ABC for distribution rights to kinescopes of "Tales of Tomorrow." Network syndication arms have been exploring the possibilities, but they aren't yet convinced that the AFTRA repayment terms are equitable or feasible. But meanwhile, the kinescope remains a potentially powerful factor in the syndication field.

Finally, there's the dream of every syndicator, the establishment of a filmed network. Which brings us up to the present, with Guild Films' attempt to set up such an operation with the Vitapix stations. It's been tried before, but the Guild-Vitapix setup is the first to have gone so far. Idea is to sell a filmed package to a national bankroller by providing not only package but pre-cleared time in over 60 markets. As a major industry development, this more than any other, bears watching, and if it proves successful, may solve some basic problems for the entire industry.

TV Nose-Counting

Continued from page 100

him later what he has plunked down his money for earlier. But tv can hardly be such a catch-as-catch-can medium what with so little prime time available, come high or low rating.

Let the economic experts chart themselves and their clients into a stupor and they still won't come up with all the key answers. That must be so in a tv industry under which qualitative considerations with respect to a program are frequently, if not overwhelmingly, subordinated to quantitative considerations in terms of sales. Without the agency-via-sponsor setup, American television could not have made the strides it has, but by the same token it is this same double-headed body who has an obligation to television, and hence the television public, to stay with the program of his choice until it becomes economically unfeasible for him to continue.

In practice, that should mean, contrary to latterday thinking, a written understanding to accept the first cycle as the preliminary round, the second cycle as the "aging" process, and the third go-round as the finals of the first season. Television being what it is, sponsor, agency and broadcaster must give each program every opportunity to make good over a long run (39 weeks minimum) before making with the fish-eyes.

As far as audience measurers are concerned, what's the rush? Can't they be caused by their clients, under a new formalized concept, to hold off on the findings until at least 13 weeks have elapsed?

Shea Story

Continued from page 108

of it in a series of "grass-roots" promotions designed to get the people to know us better—and to help us know our listeners better.

Starting with a weekend long promotion in Irvington, N. J., these community salutes have moved through Westchester and Long Island. The station personalities have done their shows from the community, had local people on the shows, mingled with the local folks before and after the broadcasts, learned their problems, hopes and dreams, and determined ways in which we could be of greater service to them.

This series of salutes is continuing so we might know our neighbors better and so that they might know us as REAL people with the same hopes and dreams they have.

WRCA is programmed with big names who know the only bigger names is that of his neighbor and his neighbor's kid.

We're local enough to receive 120,000 entries for a contest conducted on "Kids Today," a 15-minute program for children seen daily at 6:45 a.m., (that's what I said, 6:45 a.m.). The youngsters were asked to submit their concept of Thanksgiving in a contest entitled "What Thanksgiving Means to Me."

While our studios are located in New York's towering RCA building, WRCA is local enough to have a farm editor, and a daily farm program on radio. Local enough to tell the farmers of our area (and there are farms right in New York City) vital market and crop information.

And so I say to my advertising agency friend, who started this whole thing, if the best read newspaper with the largest total circulation is the community weekly, aren't radio and television stations like WRCA and WRCA-TV, if they seek a real "local" flavor, bound to have the best circulation too? I say you can't get local enough.

SPECS & NOSTALGIA

TV Version vs. Original Stage Productions as Station Bally

NBC-TV is using upcoming color spectaculars as the fulcrum for affiliate station bally of an unusual sort. In the case of the Max Liebman-produced "Naughty Marietta" starring Alfred Drake and Patrice Munsel on Jan. 15, affiliates are being supplied with photographs from the original Broadway production of 1910. These, together with stills of the Metro film version starring Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddy, are being whipped up into featurette trailers consuming up to five minutes.

The web thinks it has a "new medium" for exploitation on its hands in "Operation Nostalgia." Don Bishop's program publicity department sent out letters to the 97 stations carrying "Marietta" asking whether they'd be interested in the photo material along with other data on the Victor Herbert operetta. As of last week, there were affirmative responses from 35 affiliates.

CBS-TV's Albany Pact

Formal papers have been signed giving WROW - TV, Albany, the status of a limited alternate affiliate of CBS-TV in the tri-city area (Albany - Troy - Schenectady). Station was bought several months by a syndicate headed by CBS newscaster Lowell Thomas.

Pact becomes effective on Feb. 1.

WNJR
Newark, N. J.

America's Greatest Rhythm and Blues Station

GREAT SALE OF COMEDY MATERIAL

(Brand new original comedy scripts written by the greatest comedy writers in show biz today)

- 25 monologs $10
- 12 complete new gag-files $10
- 20 pantomime sketches $15
- 15 skits $10
- 15 dialogs $10

(These pantomime sketches are hilarious. From 1 to 10 people. From 3 to 10 minutes. If you wish, you can insert dialogue. It isn't necessary that you be a facial pantomimist. You get the laughs from the visual bits.)

FREE: With every order we'll send you 10 song parodies.

LAUGHS UNLIMITED
106 W. 45th St., New York, N. Y. JUdson 2-0373

Season's Greetings
JIM LOUNSBURY
"Bandstand Matinee" "Listen To Lounsbury"
WGN AND WGN-TV

Tele Follow-Ups

Ralph Edwards' "This Is Your Life" last Wednesday night (NBC-TV) was one of the most heart-warming of the tv showman's current semester. It was a tribute, and a deserved one, to Jennie Grossinger, as a humanitarian and one of today's standout femme personalities. From her studio walk-in, with lifetime friend Eddie Cantor and associate Milt Blackstone as escorts, and spanning the exciting eras from the days she emigrated to America with her steerage-bound parents to her present worldly status, the 30-minute stanza was jampacked with personalities that transcended sectarian barriers. Such close intimates to whom the honored guest served as an inspiration as Jackie Robinson, Eddie Fisher (whose career was incubated at the Grossinger upstate New York resort), Ambassador James G. MacDonald, a Catholic priest who, when financial aid and succor was needed, found Jennie's generosity and friendship as a beacon; a host of close friends and kin flown to the Coast for the surprise occasion by Edward (with, of course, Ida on tap with Eddie)—all were fused into a warm, tasteful capsule biog treatment in which showmanship and affection shined. *Rose.*

In striving for originality, "Danger" took on lots more than it could dramatically handle a week ago Tuesday (Dec. 28). The CBS-TV stanza departed from its mystery format in an attempt to build suspense through a semi-documentary story. It was a Paul Monash tv adaptation, called "Menace From the East," of a This Week mag shortie by Pat Frank, and it concerned an unidentified four-engine plane making for the northeastern U.S. on Xmas Day.

Since at least 50% of the show was in film, borrowed from U.S. Air Force stock, and since that military arm reportedly worked closely with "Danger" producer David Heilweil and director Tom Donovan to give the story a ring of authenticity, the half-hour stanza looked like a trial run on CBS' upcoming answer (a vidfilm skein on flying) to NBC's "Victory at Sea."

The Monash tale began with film clips of a plane making its way toward the U.S. from the Arctic Circle, how the plane was finally detected by radar, then lost, then rediscovered by ground observers, etc., and how it ultimately evolved that three runaway Russians had decided to make a break for freedom—meanwhile scaring the Air Force and half the nation out of their festivities and half out of their wits. Scribbler was trying to make a stark comparison between the danger that might come with an unknown military aircraft and the serenity of homelife on Xmas. However, the frequent cutting from one mood to another, plus the super-dramatic narration, borrowed heavily on cliche, and dulled any comparison intended. For example, Monash had narrator Norman Rose say ominously several times "The Day is Xmas." Such as that and David Broekman's cacaphonic musical score intruded on what was basically an exciting yarn. Monash couldn't avoid a chintzy dramatic close. After the Russkies told the commanding general that they made for freedom on Xmas because they felt that the day was lucky, Monash went O. Henry with this narrative close: "It was Xmas; and three men came from the east." Idea was there, but the consummation was on the verge of being ludicrous. *Art.*

I'm looking for a

CREATIVE POSITION

to build a future on. 29, married, former metro daily news reporter (features); L.L.B. degree; Barnard—NBC school of TV writing, directing & producing. Salary second to future. If you want a creative idea man in advertising; publicity; promotion; writing, or anything related—I offer my ability for your approval. Write Box V 162, Variety, 154 W. 46th St., N. Y.

BYRON R. KELLEY

Television Director

Fred Waring Show

Westinghouse Summer Theatre

Danger

REHEARSAL HALLS

LARGE BALLROOMS, STAGE, BY DAY, WEEK OR MONTH

REASONABLE RATES

BEETHOVEN HALL

210 E. 5th St., New York City

OR 4-0459

Irving Gitlin

Continued from page 103

screening of "Fordham U.—The Seismological Laboratory" was arranged for leading prelates of the Archdiocese of New York. The annual meeting of the American Speech and Hearing Clinic Association in St. Louis, and the National Society for Crippled Children and Adults in Boston have seen private screenings of the Iowa film on stuttering. The Texas A & M film on beef cattle research, will be shown at the Texas State Fair.

And so it goes. In addition to reaching a large section of the lay public with the wonderful story of the research being done at our universities, we have been fortunate enough to attract the attention of the professional groups allied to this research. They consider that the series helps them and, of course, their saying so helps us.

Last, and perhaps the most sincere indication that the "Search" is doing all we had hoped it would are the letters similar to the following:

"We have received a request from the U.S. Naval Academy for a print of the "Waco Tornado" broadcast. If it is possible to make a negative available, it is planned to use it for instruction purposes at the U.S. Naval Academy," S. J. Wornom, Jr., Lt. Commander, J.S. Navy, Radio-TV Pictorial Branch.

Requests for films of "The Search" broadcasts have come in from New York City's Department of Corrections; from insurance companies and trade magazines and universities and high schools; from the office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, in Washington, and even from the Director of Road Research in Middlesex, England.

The requests for 16m prints of each program on "The Search" have been so numerous and for such worthwhile purposes that, *for the first time, we* have had to arrange for a separate organization just to accommodate these requests. This operation is currently being set up and we hope to be able to provide prints of "The Search" broadcasts to all who ask.

Certainly the history of the first month of "The Search" is unlike the history of any other broadcast program in our experience. If any proof were needed that a vast, vital, and responsive market exists in this country for worthwhile programming, surely the experience of "The Search" is convincing evidence.

"The Search" has been a challenge to those of us who worked on it; to those in CBS who supported us when the going was tough; but, also, it was a challenge to our audience—the public, the press, and the experts. For their reaction, their response, and their support, we are deeply grateful.

'Jewish Philosopher' Renewed for 18th Year

"The Jewish Philosopher," claimed to be radio's longest-running Jewish program, has been renewed for the 18th consecutive year. Carnation, via Erwin, Wasey's L. A. office, picked up the check for the show for another semester via WEVD, N. Y.

Show is a cross-the-board package owned by C. I. Lutsky Enterprises.

'Danny Dee's' New Distribution Setup

Danny Dee Enterprises, the telepix producing firm which turns out the "Adventures of Danny Dee" kidfilm strip, has turned distribution of the package over to the Sportsvision, the San Francisco distrib out. Pact became effective Jan. 1.

Danny Dee Enterprises, of which Roy Doty, who stars in the show, is a partner, had been distributing itself and set the show's initial exposures, among them a multi-market deal with Pez candy.

How to Stop Price War

Continued from page 99

But syndicators must still perform a big educational job for their financial backers. The syndicator is in a position to render the industry a service by being honest and forthright with his angel. The syndicator can predict, with a fair degree of accuracy, the length of time it will take to realize this return.

The backer must be made to realize that profits in film-syndication are of the long-haul variety. Only on this basis can we eliminate the vicious cycle of distressed property selling, which gluts the market and besmirches the industry.

Just as we helped solve the re-run problem so have we dedicated ourselves to exercising this latest bugaboo on the horizon of film syndication. When investors are educated to realize that patience is paramount to sound investment, we will have taken a long stride toward stabilizing the economy of the business.

FOR JOHNSON'S WAX

FOR PET MILK

CBS

CBS-TV

Peculiar Is the Word for Argentine Films

STORY SELECTION A GLARING FAILURE — PRODUCERS' MISUSE OF GOVERNMENT CREDIT KILLS GOLDEN PERONISTA GOOSE — NOW FLIRTING WITH EUROPEAN TALENT AND 'CO-PRODUCTION'

Buenos Aires.

The year 1954 was crucial for every phase of the Argentine film business, but especially for the national product, which had to crash foreign markets, or collapse. And wasn't good enough.

The methods used were peculiar, consisting mostly in staging a lavish International Festival, and demonstrating a spendthrift prodigality in entertaining foreign visitors. Barter deals for exchange of a few Argentine pictures for many French and Italian ones resulted, but such deals are not very productive for anyone.

Three Argentine features, as well as a number of propaganda documentaries were entered at European festivals: "Valparaiso Express" (Big V) at Berlin; "It Happened in Buenos Aires" (AAA) at Prague, and "Barrio Gris" (and unofficially "Lo Quintrala" (Big V) at Venice. To borrow a colloquial expression: "they passed with more pain than glory."

Of 48 Argentine-made features released in 1954 only four grossed reasonably well, despite Protectionist advantages such as: each first-run or move-over house having to exhibit a national film one week in every month, and other houses having to show 50% native product throughout the year.

Since the Mar del Plata Festival, all the accent in production circles is on co-production with European producers and contracts with European stars to make pictures for the major local producers. Press Minister and Entertainment Czar Raul Apold toured Europe on a "co-production" scheme sales tour and believes he has France, Italy and Britain "in the bag."

Juggled Interest Rates

What else is co-production but a confession of failure? The film industry in Argentina owes the State Credit Bank something like $10,000,000, with little chance of its recovery. Moreover the industry stands discredited, since some producers abused the bank's loan policy of 70% of production costs, by inflating budgets to obtain capital, which was farmed out at higher interest rates to other industries. Many pictures on the strength of which loans were obtained, never got into the can. Consequently the State is now nixing most loan applications from the industry (23 out of 24 were nixed recently) and producers will have to finance themselves in 1955 from the product of an eight centavo tax on all film-theatre stubs sold. This tax will provide plenty of dough, but no one yet knows how it will be split amongst the hungry applicants. One idea is that cash prizes will go to reasonably good pictures, possibly 40% to the 10 best, 30% to second-best, 20% to third-best and the remaining 10% for newcomers in production.

Here again, the good grossing foreign material will be subsidizing native production.

How far from money-making the native product is can be indicated by the fact that "La Pasion Desnuda" (Sono), starring Maria Felix and Carlos Thompson, which was a best-seller in 1953, with a first-run gross of $100,000, caused the exhibitor a $4,70C loss, plus further incalculable loss implied running a native picture at the peak period of the year.

Little has actually come of the producers' grandiose announcements of contracts with European talent after the film festival. Mexico's ace director, Emilio Fernandez, is here, but not too happy over the script of "La Tierra del Fuego se Apaga" which Mapol submitted for his direction (Italy's Raf Vallone is to play male lead). Story selection seems the Achilles' heel of local production and Spain's Aurora Bautista has rejected various scripts submitted her for the two pictures she was slated to make here. Of those who did make pictures here in 1954, Ana Mariscal has already completed her chore, as have Italy's Massimo Girotti and Alba Arnova, also Portugal's Antonio Villar. Arturo de Cordova has repeatedly promised but not come, and Maria Felix is always "expected" any day.

While here on a personal appearance tour, Gina Lollobrigida was quizzed endlessly on her preparedness to film for Argentine studios. The replies were amiable but inconclusive. Foreign guests can't very well refuse offers point-blank while accepting hospitality, but eventually when it comes to cases their wage demands go high (as in the case of Viviane Romance and Michel Simon) or script suggestions are found inacceptable.

A co-production scheme likely to jell is that of Sir Alexander Korda, who has a blueprint to use coin frozen here to make "Sun in the Blood" with Emeric Pressburger and Michael Powell producing and directing.

Luis Cesar Amadori flew post-haste to France while Sr. Apold was there, to parley co-production deals with French producers, to make "Passengers of the Infinite," in three episodes, one in Paris, directed by Marc Allegret with Zully Moreno (Mrs. Amadori) in the lead, another in B. A., which he himself would direct, with Andree Debar (who wants to do a biopic of Eva Peron) in the lead, and a third to be directed and played in by Orson Welles.

Big publicity play is made here of an alleged plan of John Wayne's to roll a film here, whereas his intention was only to make a sports sequence on the national mounted handball game of "Pato" for "The Big Fist."

Compulsory Vaudeville

The most controversial event of 1954 was the enforcement of the law making vaudeville turns obligatory in film-theatres. This caused intense disruption to exhibitors and considerable financial losses. The rule exasperates distributors, irritates audiences and can't be very heartening for performers who must perform before hostile film-fans impatient to get on to the feature. The main effect of this law has been to alter filmgoing habits, as the masses have taken to patronizing early afternoon or evening shows at which the vaudeville turns are not on. Here they pay for something which they don't see, but do not mind.

The start of CinemaScope in April proved a blockbuster and brought home to a government insistent on maintaining absurdly lowscales that the public was eager and willing to pay more for screen entertainment. At a price four times that of flat-screen material, "The Robe" has now run nine months and grossed about $1,000,000.

As yet nothing rivals films as entertainment and it's cheaper to see a film here than it is to have coffee and rolls. In the first four months of 1954, in 206 B. A. film theatres, 21,000,000 fans attended 60,000 performances, which netted $7,013,970.

Jap Pix Industry's Postwar Upbeat Marked by Boff Year at B.O. in 1954

By RICHARD H. LARSH

Tokyo.

The year 1954 saw the culmination of a steady five-year upsurge in the Japanese motion picture industry, as the best year in history was racked up at the boxoffice and in words of critical praise from around the world.

The six principal companies—Daiei, Nikkatsu, Shintoho, Shochiku, Toei and Toho—and a host of indies released approximately 330 films an increase of about 30 over 1953.

Of these, 60% were contemporary dramas, the remainder being in the category of pre-Meji Era dramas, marking a trend toward the modern film. Approximately 275 documentary shorts were produced by 51 indies during the period, as well as more than 200 newsreels. Overall footage of domestically manufactured raw film was better than 225,000,000 feet.

Foreign films imported during the year totalled 220, with the majority (more than 120) coming from the U. S., including some dozen in CinemaScope or VistaVision. About 100 foreign shorts, almost all cartoons, were released during the year and Japan got to see Cinerama in an unlimited roadshow which opened in Tokyo and Osaka at year's end and promised to run on until next year's Christmas holidays at least.

$80,000,000 B.O.

Total b.o. for the year was estimated in October to hit the $80,000,000 mark, or almost $1 per head of every man, woman and child in the tiny island country. U. S. filmmakers expected to realize their best year with $22,000,000 of this, about 13% better than last year's $18,500,000. Aggregate film attendance for the year in the nation's 4,296 houses was conservatively estimated at 1,000,000,000.

Japanese motion pictures today fall into two major classes: sheer entertainment and serious art. In the former category, actioners based on sword-swinging samurai heroes are the mainstay. In the art class, a number of successes have been produced. Another marked tendency in 1954 was the increase in color films, with eight tinters released by year's end and a promise of 10 more by March, 1955. Two of these, from Daiei Studios, won international awards: "Hell Gate" at Cannes and "Golden Demon" at the first Southeast Asian Film Festival in Tokyo in May.

Daiei, unanimously hailed here as the "studio of the year," also picked up a Silver Lion at the 1954 Venice fest with its b&w "Sansho Dayu," bringing to seven the number of top international awards the studio has garnered since its entrance into the field in 1951 with "Rashamon," winner of the Grand Prix at Venice that year.

Coproduction Into Swing

Coproductions with foreign studios got into swing in 1954, with actual deals materializing with Italy, Germany and Southeast Asia countries and with promise of Japan-American joint efforts in the immediate future. The history of such productions had not been successful previous to this year, what with ill-fated ventures like "Tokyo File 212," "Forever My Love" and "Anatahan," all made with small U. S. indies and Japanese studios. However, a Toho tie-up with the Italian Garrone Studios resulted in a reportedly successful version of Puccini's "Madame Butterfly." The same Japanese studio also firmed a coproduction arrangement with Indian producer A. J. Patel for early next year, while Daiei has tentative plans with Honk Kong and Singapore companies. Shintoho had signed a contract to do a dualler with an Italian studio and had huddled long with United Artists' Arthur B. Krim on a similar effort during his September visit to Japan.

Japan as a location land, however, came out strong in 1954, with several U. S. companies sending crews here for background footage and in some cases even bringing the stars. Paramount's "Bridges of Toko-Ri" was shot partly in Tokyo with stars William Holden and Mickey Rooney present; in October, Columbia sent a crew to shoot footage for "The Gentle Wolfhound" and 20th-Fox sent stars and technicians in December for "Tokyo Story." West Germany's Divina Studios trip to Japan was the most ambitious as its producer brought three leading players to shoot many sequences for "The Sorge Story." While not a coproduction, the spy saga used several leading Japanese actors and actresses, and the Germans remained here from August to November.

Advent of CinemaScope was the big news to exhibs, with the number of C-Scope houses rising to nearly 100 at the end of the year. New system gave a big boost to equipment manufacturers, principally Victor Co. of Japan, Ltd., which was producing 30 homemade four-track stereophonic and Perspecta systems a month at year's end.

Nikkatsu entered VistaVision production at the end of the year and Toho had completed a CinemaScope stage and production was underway on its first effort in the medium, "Hosokawa Gracia-Den."

Government Aid

The native industry looked to get aid from the government in 1955 to enable it to increase its exports, which brought in only $850,000 during 1954. Masaichi Nagata, Daiei prexy, chief of the Motion Picture Industrial Promotional Council, was making headway in his effort to obtain long-term, low interest loans from the government to assist Japanese companies to make coproductions abroad and at home. The Ministry of International Trade and Industry established late in the year a Motion Picture Dept. in the government Industry Export Conference, listing it among the "chemical" industries for consideration for aid from the government in various ways.

Meanwhile, Nikkatsu, the newest of the Big Six and an omniverous user of foreign films, principally U. S., in its chain of theatres throughout the country, announced in October that it would be able to dispense almost entirely with foreign product in 1955 and supply its exhibs with all-Nikkatsu produced features. At year end, the studio had a stockpile of 20 films in cans and its four new stages were busy with more. Paradoxically, expansion of the studio was financed in part by U. S. majors, who allowed delayed payments for their product during 1954. Nikkatsu even threatened to use its $1,000,000 Tokyo flaghouse, the Marunouchi Nikkatsu, completed early this year, as an occasional showplace for its own product next year.

While the government and the industry leaders moved slowly toward policies which would reduce the number of foreign films to be imported—through plans for reduced quotas in 1955-56 and through increased home production—the spate of "anti-American" films which began in early 1953 with "Tower of Red Lillies" and continued through "Children of the A-Bomb," "Hiroshima," "Mixed Blood Children' 'and "Red Line Military Base," seemed to have tapered off during 1954, perhaps as a result of financial difficulties of the small indies, who were the biggest producers of the hatepix. Instead, Japanese producers turned in 1954 to pix inspired by the Italian sexpic, "Tomorrow Is Too Late," and turned out a half dozen or more of their own adolescent problem pix. Another trend was toward film versions of popular radio soap operas, one of which, "Kimi no Nawa," issued in three parts by Shochiku, turned out to be the year's surprise hit.

Bumper Aussie Legit for 1955

By HARALD A. BOWDEN
(Director, J. C. Williamson Theatres, Ltd.)

Melbourne.

The year 1955 should prove a bumper one for legit in Australia. There are so many attractions listed, that the various entrepreneurs will find it difficult to secure bookings. Many of them will have to rely on J. C. Williamson Theatres Ltd. But as this firm (of which I am the director) has a full list of attractions of its own, it may prove to the disadvantage of managements not having their own theatres.

Williamson is starting off with the British stars Googie Withers and John McCallum in a repertoire consisting of "A Country Girl" (Odets), "The Deep Blue Sea" (Rattigan), and a new play by Alan Melville, "Simon & Laura," now current in London. At the larger theatres the firm will follow its current British version of "Paint Your Wagon" with an imported Italian Grand Opera Co., Nevin Tait having made several trips to Italy to organize the tour. About 26 Italian principals will join up with Australian leads and chorus, the latter singing in English.

Then the Old Vic Co., headed by Robert Helpmann and your own Katharine Hepburn, will fly to Australia and present a repertoire consisting of "The Merchant of Venice," "The Taming of the Shrew" and "Measure for Measure." Williamson will handle the tour on behalf of Old Vic.

Sydney will be favored with the premiere of "Teahouse of the August Moon," which opens at the Theatre Royal on Easter Saturday with a cast largely recruited in New York.

With "Can-Can" the firm's next big musical, auditions were held by me in New York during my recent visit there. "Pajama Game" is being tied up by the firm to follow "Can-Can" and one or two of Broadway's earlier successes, like "My Three Angels," will be presented in the smaller Williamson houses.

Conferences in New York and Washington lead to the hope that "Porgy and Bess" may be seen in Australia. I flew to Paris recently to check on the production there and confirmed the fact that the Williamson theatres are suitable for the exact reproduction of the Gershwin opus.

After Judith Anderson's magnificent work in the televised "Macberth," it's quite in the cards that Australia will see its own Australian-born star in her famous role of "Medea."

With David N. Martin concentrating on overseas stars, his first 1955 importation will be Winifred Atwell, who made such a hit at the Folies Bergere. The French artist is likely to remain in Australia for a long period. In addition, Sir Ralph and Lady Richardson are contemplating a tour Down Under in 1955. Australia should be well catered to, and as Australian theatregoers are fortunate in having only the world's greatest successes presented to them, there should be no casualties as befell some of the New York productions.

Italy's Legit: It's Starving

By ROBERT F. HAWKINS

Rome.

Italy's legitimate theatre continues in the doldrums, with only Milan and Rome helping to keep it alive. "Caine Mutiny Court Martial" is the only hit so far in the Roman season, although adaptations of other Yank pieces are slated for later in the season.

For the first time in many years, the usually flourishing musical revue field has been hit by a growing dearth, which has sent impresarios scurrying after new material, both in human and in script form. Only two revues, headed by respectively, Carlo Dapporto and Wanda Osiris, have drawn well at the b.o., with the latter aided by the imported presence of Henri Salvador.

Concert attractions have done well and opera season has been well-attended.

Yank talent in 1954 achieved rare critical recognition from diehard Italo music-lovers, with plaudits going to composers Sidney Bernstein, Gian-Carlo Menotti, and, finally, George Gershwin, whose "Porgy and Bess" at last had made La Scala.

Film Trouble in Alsace

Frankfurt.

The tiny section of Alsace, which has long been a bone of contention between France and Germany, now has film problems. The deputy for Alsace, H. Rosenblatt, has complained to the French National Assembly that Alsace is being swamped with cheap, inferior German pictures.

For the benefit of the German-speaking population there, he has suggested that the best French films be dubbed into German and shown.

Show Biz in a Divided Metropolis

West Berlin Overshadows Soviet Zone Which Goes Back to Yankee Jazz in Self Defense—American Influence Very Strong — Night Life Dull But Table - To - Table Mail and Phones Perpetuate Sex Lure—Spanish Bullfight Too Cruel for Germans

By HANS HOEHN

Berlin.

Visitors to West Berlin are usually pleasantly surprised at this city's fast reconstruction, recovery and progress since the big Krieg. Despite various handicaps arising from W-Berlin's isolation from E-Berlin, things are humming in the arts and sciences.

True, there is misery. The high number of jobless and other needy people, the general coin shortage, the refugees that keep coming from the East, the big number of unrepaired bombed out homes and delinquents of various kinds must be taken into account. Criminals take advantage of Berlin's position as a divided city.

American influence, chiefly resulting from the presence of G.I.s and Hollywood films plus a flood of stateside magazines, have affected young Berliners to such an extent that many look and act more American than the Americans. They wear blue jeans and crew cuts, prefer Coca-Cola and bubble gum, jitterbug and exhibit a considerable predilection for New Orleans. jazz.

More seriously, a large percentage of plays running at local theatres have been of American origin. Even Billy Graham came here last year and stirred up a new religious movement, as have the Christian Science people.

Filmstadt Berlin

One once referred to Berlin as a Filmstadt (film town) since there was a time when 80% of all German features were made here. For a long time, this Filmstadt was more dead than alive. But W-Berlin has managed to slowly regain much of its former reputation. Statistics reveal that 35-40% of the all W-German film activity was centered in W-Berlin last year. This, however, included also the work of the synchronization and printing plants, without which this city's share of all West German film production was about 15-20%.

In 1954 an increasing number of foreign outfits were making pix in Berlin. 20th-Fox shot parts of its "Night People" here, the British Warwick Prod. picked Berlin as the locality for "A Prize of Gold," etc. It helped, too, to have the Annual International Film Festival. This assembled 26 foreign nations and a number of international stars, such as Josephine Baker, Ulla Jacobsson, Anita Bjoerk, Georges Guetary, Charles Trenet, Luis Mariano.

U. S. films currently play first fiddle in the Kurfuerstendamm (firstrun) area, but the overall German films are on top. Boxoffice popularity in October showed German pix winning 51.1% of playdates as against American films with 24.0%, followed by Austrian, French, Italian and British features.

Most popular U. S. film in 1954 has undoubtedly been "Gone With the Wind" (M-G). Latter registered a unique record by completing a full year's run at the Kurbel (which obtained exclusive showing rights in Berlin). Pic is still running at this house.

The Legitimate Theatre

Compared with prewar times, W-Berlin's legit life is, of course, still skimpy. Best remembered of 1954 are "Teahouse of the August Moon," "A Moon for the Misbegotten," "The Caine Mutiny," "The Matchmaker" and "Dial M for Murder." Top performances were turned in by Oscar Karlweis in "Moon," Ruth Gordon, Sam Levene and Eileen Herlie in "Matchmaker" (shown here during the Cultural Festival by a British theatre group), Elisabeth Bergner in Rattigan's "The Enticing Depth," Greta Mosheim in "The Heiress." Best foreign directors included Tyrone Guthrie ("The Matchmaker"), Kurt Hirschfeld and Leopold Lindtberg, both Swiss, who directed "Moon for the Misbegotten."

Within Germany, Berlin is regarded as the particular hotspot for jazz fans. Longplay jazz records, American radio Hitparades, jitterbug contest, jam sessions—all contribute to this reputation. A lift was given by the various jazz ensembles from the U. S., including Billie Holiday, Red Norvo Trio, Buddy DeFranco, Beryl Booker Trio, Ella Fitzgerald, Benny Carter, Oscar Peterson, Bill Harris, Roy Eldridge, Charlie Chavers), Count Basie, Woody Herman, Sarah Vaughn, Coleman Hawkins, Illinois Jacquet, Lionel Hampton.

The most prominent place is now as before the Badewanne (Bath Tub) which features a small combo a la George Shearing. The best Dixie in town is to be heard in the Kajuette, the place of the Spree City Stompers who had done much to foster the taste for that style. Another popular spot is Club 22, a rendezvous place for those who are most fond of Dizzie Gillespie's music. There's also the Quartier de Jazz for those who like it the noisy way.

W-Berlin has one of the world's finest orchestras, the Berlin Philharmonic. Great instrumentalists and conductors came in 1954, among them Wilhelm Furtwaengler, Karl Boehm, Hans Knapperisbusch, Hans Bosbaud, Georg Solti, Paul Hindemith, Wolfgang Martin, Karl Krueger, Mathieu Lange, Eugen Ormandy, Eugen Jochum, Volker Wangenheim, Walter Gieseking, Yehudi Menuhin, Erna Sack, Monique de la Bruchollerie, Serge Jaroff's Don Cossack Choir, the Viennese Hoch—und Deutschmeister, the 7th U. S. Army Band, etc. Most of these attractions went SRO.

The only opera house left in the West Sector is the former Volksoper, which became the Staedtische Oper (Municipal Opera)after 1945. It manages to hold up qualitatively.

Niteries

W-Berlin cabarets were mainly on the dull side. It is estimated that roughly 65% of all who go to the Resi are non-Berliners. Its popularity is owing to its intersex communication setup: the pneumatic table mail service plus the telephone service (250 table phones). In addition, there is the water show with fountains in colors synchronized to music. There are posters all over Berlin: Everyone once in Berlin—Everyone once in the Resi. There's much truth to that.

Otherwise, not much, and very expensive.

Radio played a big role in 1954. For the listeners in the Soviet Zone of Germany W-Berlin's radio stations still mean more or less the only information source. NWDR-Berlin, with headquarters in Tamburg (British Zone), was turned over last year to SFB (Sender Freies Berlin), an independent station which is operating on two wavelengths, as is RIAS (Radio in the American Sector), a U. S. sponsored station. For those who have taken a 100% fancy to Americanism, there is only one local station: The American Forces Networks.

Radio Berlin, Soviet-controlled station, occasionally offered firstclass musical stuff. All East German radio stations broadcast Yankee jazz recordings. It's generally felt that they did this primarily in connection with their hope to win back East Zone listeners whose only opportunity to hear Western dance music had only been via a West German radio station until then.

Television Catching On

Television is slowly but constantly climbing here. Best material in 1954 was via Eurovision after June. Very popular were the Soccer Championships in Switzerland. These telecasts were of excellent clarity and contributed to popularize television in Germany. While there were only 11,658 set owners registered in a January, 1954, this number climbed to 24,788 by May, to almost 50,000 in September and was up to 70,000 at the end of the year.

In 1954, W-Berlin also had "Holiday on Ice"—always a good money-maker. Other well-remembered items were Grock, Switzerland's world-famous clown, who retired. Meanwhile, the Harlem Globetrotters basketball team who since their first appearance have become special favorites with Berliners. Jonas, the super-whale, was here drawing long lines of curio-seekers, numerous ballet ensembles, several circuses, such as Hagenbeck, Apollo and Circo Espanol starring Nati Mistral.

Latter wanted to bring bullfights to Berlin, but the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals kayoed this deal.

FAIRY GOLD

The Truth About National Celebrations And the Theatre

By W. MACQUEEN-POPE
(Of the Drury Lane, London)

London.

Everybody has heard about Fairy Gold. It is the precious metal which fills the large receptacle said to be waiting for those lucky few who reach the end of the rainbow. It is the treasure into which falling leaves, caught, before they reach the ground, by the superstitious in autumn, will turn into in due course. It is the stuff with which the streets of London were believed, but not by Londoners, to be paved. It is also the gold which flows into the coffers, per the boxoffices, of the atre managers at times of coronations, great national rejoicing, international exhibitions, festivals, victory celebrations, jubilees and all occasions on which flags are waved and illuminations lit up.

W. Macqueen-Pope

In plain words, it does not exist because all such things are bad for theatre business. They do not increase takings, they lessen them, and sometimes they reduce them to vanishing point. It has always been the same and it always will be.

But no theatrical manager ever believes it. They are, bless them, the most optimistic, courageous and credulous of men. Accustomed to living on the razor-edge of public taste, accustomed to starting a new business every time they start a new play, inured to a calling which is a gamble with a gamble, they grasp at any straw which seems, in their eager eyes, to bring the possibility of crowds into the city and therefore an increase of business. All these people flocking to London from all parts of the earth, they say—why, of course, they simply *must* go to the theatre—what else is there for them to do?

No theatrical manager can ever see any form of attraction but his own. So they rub their hands, they get busy and hatch their special productions, shows designed to reap the harvest of loose cash which those sightseeing visitors will strew around so lavishly. A special show, something compelling, something extra, something irresistible to bring in the foreign, American and provincial visitors! It must be something seasonable, and if possible, something topical. They make their announcements, blowing the trumpets for their own special production. Hope springs eternal—they always do it—they never learn by bitter experience. The cold, hard truth is that all occasions of that kind do not fill the theatres but empty them.

It is in no way disloyal to state this plain fact. The monarchs of this country have no more loyal servants than the members of the theatrical profession, which is indeed as it should be, because through all the long years when the theatre and its workers were oppressed by church and civic authority, it had one sure and constant friend, the monarch.

Richard III, whom the theatre sadly maligns, was the first king to have his own troupe of actors. It was a king, Charles II, who stopped the oppression, and gave the theatre stability and status by granting to Thomas Killigrew the Charter for Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, in the year 1663, an example followed by monarchs in other lands.

That first Drury Lane company was entitled "His Majesty's Own Company of Comedians" and that title still stands.

They had earned it, for to a man the actors fought for Charles I against Cromwell, their bitter enemy. Charles II was the first king to go to a theatre, whereas Elizabeth I, a great theatre patron, had the theatre come to her.

It was a theatre musical director, Dr. Thomas Arne, who gave us the national anthem which we sing today and it was His Majesty's Company of Comedians at Drury Lane Theatre who first sang it in public.

A "royal visit" to a play makes an atmosphere backstage which is electric and incidentally helps the play. No doubt about the theatre's loyalty.

Bad as coronations and national rejoicings are for the theatre, they are not the worst enemy it has. Its deadliest foe is the thing upon which this country prides itself the most, its demonstration of true democracy by free elections. A general election, before and during the actual polling, is boxoffice poison No. 1. The strongest and most established success reels before it.

Managers know all about elections. They know the upheaval and excitement stop people going to the theatre. Yet they never regard other causes of a similar state of mind in the same light. It is their firm and fixed belief that the millions flocking to a coronation will spend the best part of their time and money in playgoing. That was never true and never will be. It was a fallacy in 1953, too. There were masses of visitors, but for them there was a vast, absorbing free show in the street. There were the decorations, the illuminations, the procession itself. There was Buckingham Palace to gaze at for hours on the offchance of seeing the Queen.

Foreigners wanting to go to the theatre go to see plays which they cannot see at home, and are not particularly interested in those depicting English history, ancient or current. Those speaking little or no English might be attracted, in small numbers, to musical shows of a light and possibly undraped nature. But they can all understand what was to be seen outside.

History Repeats

Did the much boosted Festival of Britain help the theatres? Despite a wet summer, it did not. The Exhibition at Wembley, years before, was going to work wonders. Again, it did not. The coronation of George VI emptied the playhouses. One recalls the evening of Coronation Day. Ivor Novello, at the top of his fame, had "Careless Rapture" at Drury Lane. He put in a special song in honor of the King, and leaflets were given to the audience, hearing the words, so that they could join in. Most of those leaflets were wasted—the audience was so sparse. And it was the same all round.

Theatres played to shocking business at the Silver Jubilee of King George V, at his coronation, and at that of King Edward VII, too. That wonderful event, the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria, unique in history and productive of scenes of such splendor as can never be repeated, was another show-killer.

But the theatres were then mostly under the control of actor-managers, practical men knowing their job at first hand. What did they do during the miraculous week? Put on special Coronation shows? No, they closed down entirely and opened again the week following. Thereby they saved much money.

Wise Showman Buckstone

But the climax was surely reached at the Coronation of Queen Victoria. That sound and experienced actor-manager, J. B. Buckstone, was in command at the Haymarket Theatre—still regal and successful today. Buckstone was no fool. He knew his business. So, for Coronation Night, what did he announce? A mixed bill. It started with a Farce, "My Young Wife and My Old Umbrella," followed by a drama entitled "The White Horse of the Peppers"—which strangely enough glorified the Jacobite cause—with Tyrone Power in the lead, a special performance of a waltz by Johann Strauss, called "Elizabethan" and to close the evening another farce, written by himself, "Weak Points," in which he and the celebrated Benjamin Webster performed.

And "God Save the Queen" was to be sung by the entire audience as well. But would there be any audience? Buckstone evidently doubted it, and knowing his business, he splashed the following on his bills:

BY COMMAND

This Theatre will be Opened This Evening Gratuitously to the Public in Honor of the Coronation of Her Most Gracious Majesty!

The date was June 28, 1838.

And a special note said, "In order to prevent confusion the Public will be admitted *By Ticket Only*, which may be had on application to the boxoffice from 11 until 4 on Wednesday and Thursday. *Vivat Regina.*"

It was not Her Majesty's Command by which the theatre was opened freely to the public, but Buckstone's. Even then it was not full. But it was good publicity. It might be tried again and nobody be the loser. For when the next big national event comes along—it will be a case of The Same Again.

CinemaScope—Australia's Sheet Anchor Against TV

By ERNEST TURNBULL

Managing Director, Hoyts Theatres Ltd., and Chairman of 20th Century-Fox Films (Aust.)

Sydney.

Every chronicle of Australian film affairs for 1954 must start with CinemaScope's swift entry into most of the biggest theatres, its monopoly of the year's box-office records, and, decidedly, its overwhelmingly successful bid for the public's preference in screen entertainment.

In Australia, CinemaScope did not come to the rescue of an industry that was suffering from tv opposition. Many Australian theatres were booming before CinemaScope. Yet when figures were analyzed, there were signs that people were tiring of the standardized pattern of pictures, Except for outstanding productions, public interest wasn't there.

Television was still only a shadow two years away; it would have been easy to persuade ourselves that what television had done to motion pictures in America and Britain could never happen here.

Hoyts, for one, took the realistic view: "it must not happen here!"

Television must not be allowed to walk over a lustless and unprepared industry. Instead, the industry should use the proven weapon of America and Britain to beat back tv competition; in fact, never allow it to get effectively started.

We had been impressed by the early CinemaScope demonstrations, the success of the first CinemaScope films in New York; and stimulated by the enthusiasm of Spyros P. Skouras for the revolutionary new medium in which the future of 20th Century-Fox was staked.

Hoyts allocated £1,500,000 to equip as many of its theatres as were structurally suited, starting with key-houses in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth, all of which opened in December 1853.

How CinemaScope rolled across Australia, revolutionising the trade's ideas of earning power, as well as the public's conception of screen entertainment, is too well documented to need recapitulation. What happened in the year of subsequent trading confirmed the enduring reality of the CinemaScope revolution, besides answering those few vociferous critics who had dismissed it as a novelty without permanent value.

Long Runs

Figures tell the story. In the first year Sydney Regent has required only eight CinemaScope productions to occupy its complete playing time, and yet more than doubled the receipts of its highest previous year. At Melbourne Regent, eight CinemaScope productions earned twice the revenue of 16 of the industry's top 2-D attractions in 1953.

In the three other key cities—Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth—where theatres hitherto operated almost exclusively on a weekly-change basis, every CinemaScope production has doubled or trebled the normal run, while such pictures as "The Robe," "How To Marry a Millionaire" and "Three Coins in the Fountain" have ranged from four to eight weeks.

By the end of 1954 CinemaScope will be playing regularly in 100 circuit and independent theatres throughout Australia. Orders have been placed for another 120 equipments, to be filled as fast as manufacturers can cope with the demand. Sound installation did not equal that record in the first year of talking pictures here.

Operating a circuit on which many city and suburban theatres alternate between CinemaScope and conventional pictures, Hoyts can make accurate comparisons in drawing-power. Very few of the outstanding 2-D productions played during 1954—and Hoyts is the biggest buyer—have reached even half the regular CinemaScope receipts, although equal drive has backed the selling campaigns.

The word CinemaScope has been adopted into the language as "talkies" was.

"Is it CinemaScope?" is a constant question with the public and the deciding factor in selecting a show.

The enormous swing in patronage and revenue has not been entirely at the expense of the standard screen. CinemaScope has fulfilled its major purpose in creating new audiences, tapping money channels which previously flowed into other forms of amusements and blocking their encroachment on the motion picture field.

Television is lining up its forces. The Government will issue six licenses—two for national stations under control of the Australian Broadcasting Commission, and four for commercial circuits. Newspaper and radio interests are grouping to apply for commercial licenses; social and religious organizations will stake claims. The final four commercial outlets will be thoroughly representative in influence, but beyond that, nobody is making predictions. When, however, television does arrive it will be compelled to meet motion pictures at CinemaScope's constantly increasing peak, and an industry which has profited by world experience and is well prepared.

Near-Shutout in Mexico By Foreign Pix May Put Teeth in Quota Ruling

Mexico City.

Stronger playing of American pix and marked upbeat of European films, particularly French, Italian and British, so crowds Mexican productions for local playdates that the native trade is worried. Yanqui pix are currently very far ahead, though not quite a monopoly, on screens here. Several Hollywood films hold for long in the firstruns, the toppers and secondaries. Examples: "Naked Jungle" (Par), 10 weeks at the Cine Mexico, a topper, then a moveover to the secondary Cine Mariscala; "Demetrio and the Gladiators" (20th), eight weeks at the Mexico and the lesser Cine Regis. And the Italian pic, "Three Stories," played the Cine Arcadia, top firstrun, for eight solid weeks. Foreign pix are the only ones to restore cinema queues here.

Talk in the trade is that if this situation continues, the government must enforce the clause of the new cinematographic law that was enacted three years ago, which demands 50% playing time throughout Mexico for Mexican pix. But other Mexican piemen aver that the clause cannot be enforced because a group of exhibitors here, and another in the provinces, obtained a permanent injunction against that measure.

Await High Court Test

However, the case still has to be decided by the Supreme Court to which it was appealed by the National Cinematographic Board. In granting local exhibitors the injunction, Judge Ignacio Borgua remarked in substance that the Mexican constitution allows all merchants the right to buy and sell whatever they want to, when the goods are admitted by the law to be legitimate and which the merchants believe to be highly saleable.

Many Mexican film men fear that unless what they style intelligent action—providing pix that the public really wants—is taken pronto, hardly a cinema here will be exhibiting a native film. They still have hope that cooperation with the government's oft-stressed demand that quality predominate Mexican pix will eventually pay off.

The near-monopoly by foreign pix of local screens is not entirely offset by the edge Mexican pix have on the imports in the provinces. That edge is not so very big, and it is nothing like a wedge. The hard fact is that this city, with a population crowding 4,000,000, is the big hub of the country, and is much more of a capital than are some other top towns.

There is some expectation that Mexican pix made widescreen and in color, a venture that is scheduled to start this January, will be a hypo to the sagging condition of native films here. Certain Mexican pic folk have something when they complain that not a few foreign pix that crowd out native films are not so hot, that some Mexican pix are far better. But their problem is to sell those better pix to the local public.

15 Widescreen, Color Pix for Mex in 1955

Mexico City.

Mexico is sure to produce at least 15 pix in widescreen and color in 1955, according to Cesar Santos Galindo, manager of the Churubusco studios here, this country's largest studio.

Churubusco takes delivery soon of widescreen-color filmmaking equipment which it bought in the U. S. for a reported $150,000. That the government is more back of helping the film biz than ever is demonstrated by the fact that it exempted this equipment from import duties, plenty heavy for that kind of material.

BERLIN CENSORS EASY BUT NIX 'STALAG'

Berlin.

The W-German Censor Board is (as compared with other international boards) very generous towards foreign features. Most of the submitted films pass by without objection, while only a few undergo minor cuts (chiefly because of brutal, sadistic or obscene scenes). One of the few stateside pix that didn't get the greenlight was Paramount's "Stalag 17" (allegedly because of pic's subject).

Same board also issues distinctions ("valuable," "particularly valuable" etc.) to films. Some of the foreign pix that were declared valuable included last year's "Roman Holiday" (Par), "Lili" (M-G), "Executive Suite" (M-G), "The Living Desert" (RKO), "Caine Mutiny" (Col), "Moulin Rouge" (UA), Italy's "Pane, Amore e Fantasia," France's "Le Salaire de la Peur" etc.

Protestant Film Guild of Germany regularly names the "Film of the Month." In 1954, they were in reverse order; November back to January:

"Der letzte Sommer" (German)
"Limelight" (U.S.)
"The Million Pound Note" (Rank)
"The Kidnappers" (Rank)
"Great Adventure" (Swedish)
None (June)
"The Overcoat" (Italian)
"Die letzte Bruecke" (Austrian)
"Martin Luther" (U.S.)
"Roman Holiday" (U.S.)
"Koenigliche Hoheit" (German)

U. S. Pix Take Lead Again On Greek Screens; Low Admissions, High Tax

By IRENE VELISSARIOU

Athens.

American films don't dominate the Greek screen as they did right after the war years, when they practically monopolized screen time, covering more than the 75% of dates. Steady decline the last few years reached the 53.17% mark in 1953 due to local and European competition. European films are doing increasingly better in this market.

But indications that American releases are gaining in the field again are confirmed by recent figures concerning key cities' grosses for last summer. During this period—of intensive exploitation to many open-air theatres all over the country—U. S. total represented 58.92% of the local market, an increase of 5.75% over the previous year.

Local competition to foreign films isn't as strong now as it used to be, due to the fact that audiences are becoming more discriminating. Local competition takes only 10.96% of total playing time. Italian films hold 11.29%, French 6.89% and British 5.45%.

Widescreen is having greater acceptance here than third dimension. Most of the firstrun theatres in key cities have installed wide screens. Only two theatres are equipped for C'Scope in Athens, two in Pireaus and one in Salonica. There is one theatre in Athens which will show VistaVision pictures.

Greek exhibitors are mostly small independent operators with limited capital and this makes them more conservative towards the new techniques, especially those which require costly installations.

Greece probably has the cheapest film entertainment in the world. First-run admission price in Athens, which is the highest, is 10 drachmas (33c). On the other hand, the admission tax drains the boxoffice to the tune of almost 45%. If a reasonable proportion of that money could be channelled back and divided between exhibitors and distributors, balance sheets would be healthier. Greek exhibitors would be able then to pay higher percentages, which now cannot be over 40% even for the most lavish productions.

British Legit Outlook Continues Bright After Boom Year in 1954

By CLEM HUMPHRIES

London.

Show business is always unpredictable. In 1953, the Coronation Year harvest confidently anticipated by impresarios proved a sad disappointment. The bright illuminations and decorated streets proved a bigger attraction than the dimmer lights of the theatre within. In reverse, the tide turned with the advent of the more mundane year of 1954 and the first real boom for many years proved strongly beneficial to the live theatre. This followed as a natural sequence to the uptrend of Britain's trade and industrial output, which reached peak levels in the country's annals. With a flourishing commercial background, unrestricted spending became the rule and the entertainment world automatically cashed in on the phenomenon. More overseas visitors were recorded, probably holdovers of many who failed to get passages in the overwhelming demand the previous year.

Another major factor contributing to the boxoffice bonanza was unquestionably the cold, wet spring and almost record-breaking bad summer that put a literal damper on outdoor sports, holiday resorts and anything where the vagaries of the weather marred open-air plans. Many people gave up their customary vacation visits, preferring to cope with the depressing conditions at home and patronizing indoor amusements rather than waste money on an unrewarding change of scene.

The coach trip habit is growing, whereby parties in outlying suburban districts get convenient return transport and cheaper theatre seats. Also, the railway innovation of running reduced evening rates from outside London was an added incentive in attracting distant theatre patronage.

80 New Productions

Of some 80 new productions, about a third failed to hold up, some shows lingering on for a few months at fair business, whereas in other years they would have had a quick shuttering. With production costs and admission prices much lower here than in New York, it's easier on this side for a management to keep a play running, if overhead is not too high, in the hope of nursing it into a hit. Many a shaky starter has developed into a moneymaker and lived to laugh at its sternest critics.

Biggest hits of the year have been "Teahouse of the August Moon," "Wedding in Paris," Terence Rattigan's "Separate Tables," "I Am a Camera," "The Boy Friend," "Both Ends Meet," "The Manor of Northstead," starring the octogenarian A. E. Matthews, and Robert Morley in his own play, "Hippo Dancing." Holdovers still showing "House Full" boards were "The King and I," "Airs on a Shoestring," and the two Agatha Christie thrillers, "Witness for the Prosecution" and "The Mousetrap," latter now in its third year and the longest runner. Two lusty farces were safely launched to replace the record-breaking "Seagulls Over Sorrento" and "Reluctant Heroes," "Dry Rot" and the parliamentary rib-tickler "Party Spirit," both looking likely to fill the bill for some time to come.

Imported musicals are diminishing in popularity, and although "Guys and Dolls" ran over a year, it was a shorter run than many others of its kind. "Pal Joey" proved a disappointment for Jack Hylton, who lost a packet when the show only held up for six months. "Can Can" had an almost universal roasting from the press, but indications are that this may be just another instance of a profitable outcome emanating from an inauspicious premiere.

Of the other seven U. S. productions, excluding "Teahouse," "Fifth Season" and "The Big Knife" had modest runs, also "The Moon Is Blue," which folded when Diana Lynn returned home, but was resuscitated for a few more weeks to cash in on the release of the picture here. "The Wooden Dish," which made its debut on this side, earned high praise for Wilfrid Lawson, but failed to make good on its merits as entertainment. "Sabrina Fair," which had a divided press, "Bell, Book and Candle" and "The Matchmaker" are still current, and look like settling in well into the new year.

Revue Back In Favor

Revue, whose popularity has lain dormant for some seasons, is gradually coming back into favor, mainly through the outstanding example of the Joyce Grenfell show and "Intimacy at 8:30," and the sustained run of "Airs on a Shoestring," now in its second year. "Going to Town," which moved in from a promising tryout at the Lyric Hammersmith, failed to register against stronger competition. "Cockles and Champagne," on a more opulent and brash scale, fared even worse. The other spectacular revues, "Gay Palladium Show," starring Norman Wisdom, and the Folies Bergere sequel, "Pardon My French," have reaped a generous harvest, while the newly-opened twice-nighter "Talk of the Town" has brought added laurels to Jimmy Edwards and set the seal on his co-comedian Tony Hancock as a topliner.

The solo artist presentations staged by Ruth Draper, Cornelia Otis Skinner, Anna Russell and the miniature revue offerings by Joyce Grenfell and Bea Lillie attract their own specialized audiences, Miss Lillie's appearance after eight years' absence reviving nostalgic memories.

There were fewer continental importations this year, both in straight dramatic companies and ballet. The Japanese Ballet, which came over from Paris, didn't cut much ice, being a tame edition of more exotic dancing teams and lacking motion and variation.

The Arts Theatre Club continues to give firstrate productions of classics, revivals and foreign dramatists, but no new play of any note has emerged for a public performance. Another tryout house, the Embassy at Swiss Cottage, has been closed for most of the year, and the smaller theatre clubs are losing their grip on the theatregoers' patronage. For the first time in a decade there was no Shakespearean season at the Open Air Theatre in Regent's Park. In view of the inclement weather it was a wise decision.

Wider Old Vic Draw

The Old Vic, with such popular stars as Claire Bloom, Richard Burton, Ann Todd and Paul Rogers, is attracting a wider audience than the customary Shakespeare devotees of the past. Sadler's Wells continues to be thronged with opera and ballet enthusiasts, also Convent Garden with its more opulent setting.

No new dramatists have materialized that look promising and the best discovery since Dorothy Tutin won fame with her performances in "The Living Room" and "I Am A Camera" is a young Scots girl, Mary Ure, who achieved immediate acclaim in Jean Anouilh's play, "Time Remembered," tried out at the Lyric Hammersmith.

The mammoth ice shows are now a regular part of the London scene, and show no sign of losing their general appeal. Many family and school parties assemble for mass booking at these arenas, and around Christmas and holiday time take the place of the time-honored pantomime and circus treats for the youngsters.

All told, the future for flesh shows looks like continuing its prosperous career, unless any untoward crises in the political field rears their ugly heads.

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Brit. Producers Eye Spain Sites

Madrid.

J. Arthur Rank and other English producers are mulling the possibility of producing pix in Spain. Robert Alexander, general manager of Delta Films, which distributes Rank and other English films here, is in charge of preliminary studies and reports.

So far, there is no official co-production pact between the two countries. But, as in previous cases, private deals are shaping up with producing companies so that the resulting pic is presented as a Spanish film here. But the other partner retains the right to offer it as his own in other countries.

Delta Films' strong lineup for the 1954-55 season is headed by "Julieta and Romeo." It is followed by the Gregory Peck starrers, "Million Pound Note" and "Purple Plane." These are in great demand here because of the publicity atending Gregory Peck's filming in Spain. Delta also is negotiating for five Hollywood pictures of independent producers which are on the Paris market for European distribution.

VET SCOTCH COMIC BACK AFTER HOTELIER FLOP

Aberdeen, Scot.

Comedian Dave Willis made a comeback after three years' absence from the stage by playing the Dame role in pantomime at His Majesty's Theatre here.

Move also marks the vet comedian's bow in the key "femme" role of British pantomime. To assume it, he had to shave his black moustache, his trademark, resulting in his being criticized for dropping his distinctive comedy line.

Willis, who had retired from show biz to run a coast hotel, is making comeback at age of 60, mainly to regain coin, having been declared bankrupt through reportedly losing $90,000 as hotelier.

In "Queen of Hearts" pantomime, he costars with Jack Anthony, comedian recently back from a U.S. tour. Show is in for limited run of four weeks.

Universal Sets 12 Pix With Mex Golden Chain

Mexico City.

A dozen selected Universal pix are to be played by the famed Cadena de Oro (Golden Chain) cinema circuit, which is headed by the Cine Alameda, Mexico's pioneer swank pic playhouse.

Deal was set by Alfredo Holguin, Universal manager. U and United Artists for some time have been alternating at the Cine Real Cinema here as their showcase.

1st Mex Tele Station In Provinces Started

Mexico City.

Romulo O'Farrill, Sr., owner-operator of Mexico's pioneer video station, XHTV, channel 4, which he started here in 1950, has established this country's first tv station in the provinces, XEXTV, channel 7, in Puebla City, capital city of Puebla state.

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They're Doing The Mambo All Over Tin Pan Alley and Brill Bldg. Cooking Like Pizzeria With Multilingual Pops—Beaucoup Nuances and New Personalities In The Biz

By ABEL GREEN

The music biz, circa 1954, emerged truly a United Nations of song. The Brill Bldg. was cooking like pizzeria as result of Lou Monte's Italiano version of "Darktown Strutters' Ball," starting off a fractured spaghettina cycle. In between they were doing the mambo like crazy-mixed-up Latinos, capped by the staid Waldorf-Astoria booking the self-styled "king of the mambo" Perez Prado for the Starlight Roof. (Somebody with the Anaein concession could have done a good business there, too, during the engagement of the offbeat-kicking maestro with a penchant for "conducting" with his feet.)

The rhythm & blues and country & western influences continued unabated, running the gamut from "Oop, Shoop," "I Need Your Lovin' Bazoom" and "Sh-Boom" to "Let Me Go, Lover."

The only rival to a record plug was the freak "Studio One" (CBS) impetus given Joan Weber's "Lover" on the Columbia biscuit, and when Jackie Gleason followed it with "That's My Love Song For You," it proved the most potent opposition to the deejay's impact.

The quick click of "Love Song" was evidenced to the music dealers who got calls for "that garbage song," just because the lyric starts, "A garbage can goes bang, a radiator goes clang, put them all together that's my love song for you," etc.

But the disk jockey plug is still the big thing. Without it, it's real tough for any song.

The answer is that from nowheres came the DeCastro Sisters' "Teach Me Tonight," on the indie Abbott label, and Bill Haley's Comets on Decca, with their r&b versions on "Shake, Rattle and Roll," "Dim, Dim the Lights" and "Rock Around the Clock."

The Italian-American influence even extended unto Rosemary Clooney's elicko "Mambo Italiano," which for some reason irked deejay Martin Block as "offending the sensitivities of Amerlean-Italians," many of whom apparently phoned the ABC platter-chatterer. Miss Clooney, incidentally, proved one of the most versatile diskery delineators, running the gamut from Stuart Hamblen's "This Ole House," a religioso type hillbilly, to the Broadway musicomedy excerpt, "Hey There" (from "Pajama Game"), the first legit show tune to hit 1,000,000 records since Eddie Fisher's "Wish You Were Here" did so much to hypo that Arthur Kober-Joshua Logan-Harold Rome musical two years ago.

The Neapolitan Cycle

The UN touch, so far as the Neapolitan influences were concerned, soon saw singers like Perry Como, Frank Sinatra, Alan Dale, Dean Martin (his "That's Amore" gave that otherwise comedie half of the Jerry Lewis team his first "golden" platter), Al Martino, Louis Prima, Phil Brito and Buddy Greco indulging in heritage linguistics. Eddie Fisher's "Anema E Core" didn't quite elick, but it was part of the same cycle. Fisher, meantime, had belted out "Oh, Mein Papa" (Swiss-German excerpt), along with "My Friend" and "With These Hands," and currently is riding high with "I Need You Now," "Count Your Blessings" and "Fanny." Last two are respectively from Irving Berlin's "White Christmas" and Harold Rome's show of the same name.

The disk jockeys figured strongly also in revitalizing the r&b vogue—rhythm & blues, which used to be called Harlem or "race" records. In turn, this impetus seemed to key another jazz revival. In an oblique manner, a cycle of "naughty" songs for a time appeared to be in the making. But intra-industry concern about self-regulation may curb that, although "smooth" versions of "cute" songs—fancy talk for double-entendre lyries—have cropped up of late.

However, the prime coneern is with the r&b output, to the degree that one Memphis station summarily banned all r&b stuff and forthrightly listed its own blacklist of no less than 17 platters as being too indigo. Deejay Martin Block, apart from his gripe against "Mambo Italiano," openly voiced his impatience over the air "with the mediocrity of all these reeordings." Johnnie Ray's "Oooh, What A Night!" was banned by some stations, but paradoxically Cab Calloway's version was okayed as "eute." In England the British Broadeasting Corp. tabued "Teaeh Me Tonight" on the grounds that the lyric was an open invitation to sexual dalliance. A tabu of another sort was Australia's nix on plugging Christmas songs "starting in August," which was an exaggerated way to eue the disk jockeys that the public would be in no mood for Yule tunes until mid-Deeember.

The r&b teehniques of sundry popular voeal groups were reflected in the disk jockeys' plugging them, and in turn they further helped popularize the quartets, whose penchant ran the gamut from r&b to e&w (eountry & western) items.

Among the upcoming artists, who notably eame to the fore in '54, were groups like the Crew-Cuts, 4 Lads, 4 Tunes, 4 Freshmen, 4 Knights, Bill Haley's Comets, the McGuire Sisters, the aforementioned DeCastro Sisters, The Chordettes, the DeMareo and the Fontane Sisters. These combos made the yesteryear Andrews Sisters, Mills Bros., Ink Spots and Modernaires sound like hymn singers. Stan Freberg's Capitol satire on these foursomes, with his exaggerated version of "Sh-Boom!" was more than easual kidding-on-the-square as he admonished them to "mumble, mumble . . . I ean understand you . . . stop singing plain or I'll send you back to Hugo Winterhalter." It was an intra-trade item that deserved wider popularity and is in the best Freberg tradition, approaehing the tiptop commercial job he did with "St. George and the Dragonet."

The Chordettes, alumnae of the Arthur Godfrey stable like maestro-impresario Arehie Bieyer (now bossman of Cadenee Records, which last year clicked with "no humility" Julius La Rosa's "Eh Cumpari"), topped at year's end with their "Mr. Sandman," a surprise hit by Pat Ballard.

Jaye P. Morgan, Betty Madigan, Connie Russell, David Whitfield and Peggy King, like Joan Weber, were sudden solo personalities. Miss King got her Columbia platter break strictly from a singing commercial ("Hunt's Tomato Sauee"), and in another vein, the Halo shampoo people staged a pretty good piece of radio spot commercial showmanship by getting top diskery artists, male and female, to chirp the "Halo Everybody" jingle. Record names like Dinah Shore, Ertha Kitt, Peggy Lee, et al., did the jingles, and invariably they were preceded by a playing of their current disk release, so it made for an automatic and natural plug, seguing into the commercial.

The a&r men, of course, took the "who me?" attitude all disclaiming the shoe fits. But the trade has long recognized that "the record is king and the disk jockey is the composite Prime Minister of Tin Pan Alley." Vaughn Monroe called "the phonograph record bigger than Ziegfeld" as a starmaker and he spoke with authority as one who was a "has been" until his Victor platter, "They Were Doing the Mambo," suddenly put him up on top all over again. It made him a hotly pursued diskery talent, when for a time the pluggers only had eyes for Joni James, Patti Page, Nat (King) Cole, Como, Fisher and the like.

Speed Battle Now History

The battle of the speeds was no longer. In the five years since RCA president Frank M. Folsom, when he was first executive vicepresident of the RCA Victor division, sparked the 45's, the industry now sees a predominanee of pop recordings on 45 rpm. The 33 rpm (LP) is for long-hair, musical comedies, and the like. By the end of 1955 major diskery production of 78 rpm platters is expected to be negligible.

At the end of last year, RCA Victor made a big impact with its move to standardize prices on its 45 rpm line, slash prices up to 33% on its long play 33 rpm disks in order to double and perhaps treble the market and to boost prices on the single 78s for the reverse reason, namely, to kayo the oldstyle disks and establish the industry on a two-speed basis.

Tape recording and high-fidelity are regarded as the next big push for the disk business, and figured to lift the reeord industry to the $250,000,000 and $300,000,000 mark as hi-fi is developed.

Capitol Records, one of the industry's big suceess stories in its decade or so of operation, has signalized its progress with plans for a unique new edifiee—in the circular shape of a platter—to house all of prexy Glenn Wallichs' music enterprises on its present Sunset & Vine (Hollywood) site.

Decca's 20th anniversary celebration, of course, was one of the trade's highlights, attesting to the success of the outfit founded in 1934 by the late Jack Kapp, E. F. Stevens Jr. and Milton R. Rackmil, the present prez and the lone survivor of the founding triumvirate.

Universal's "Glenn Miller Story," with James Stewart in the title roie, was a bonanza for Decca's original soundtrack album, and also for RCA Victor whieh reissued a $25 de luxe Miller album and followed it up with another slick package this past Christmas. The picture grossed a staggering $7,000,000 and proved a big hypo to both the Deeca and Universal film stocks, since Decca owns 73% control of U. The company now has a Benny Goodman biopic in production and, even though BG is very much around, only his music will be used in the soundtrack. Other yesteryear musical idols, Russ Columbo and Ben Bernie, are being mulled for biopie treatment, and Paramount already has Danny Kaye set to play the maestro of Red Nichols and His Five Pennies in a pie of the jazz age when Nichols was in high.

Big Packaged Disk Biz

The packaged disk biz saw Jackie Gleason's sundry "mood" musie (Capitol) albums selling well; as did Bing Crosby's $27.50 biog on Decea wax, a kingsized anthology of the erooner's 25 years; Judy Garland's "Star Is Born" (Columbia), the "White Christmas" (Deeca) soundtrack album, and the Mario Lanza "Student Prince" (RCA Victor) soundtraek, among others.

Decca's president Rackmil, on the heels of his overwhelming stockholder vietory, came up with the No. 1-2 hits—Kitty Kallen's "Little Things Mean a Lot" and the Four Aces' "Three Coins in the Fountain." This was at a time when it was charged that Raekmil was too much of an absentee president of Decca, allegedly devoting too mueh time to U, and that U's earnings allegedly aecounted for Decea's prosperity (because Decea owns stock control in Universal), and that the diskery, per se, was suffering in comparison to past history.

Columbia prez Jim Conkling sueeeeded Rackmil as president of the Reeord Industry Assn. of America. The RIAA continued as the diskeries' trade association but was called to task by VARIETY for its do-nothingness of an "all-industry ehart." This was as a result of the major platters' gripe that "the eharts" were being gimmicked, had frequently fallaeious information because of "drives" or other devious oeeurrences, and, if the RIAA promulgated its own "ehart," it would at least have the virtue of uniformity.

Managers and diskery artists alike were getting fed up with deejays' demands for "meet the stars" junkets, meaning cuffo names for some of the key eity platter-ehatters who, for all their potency as exploitation outlets for the phonograph artists, were sometimes too exacting.

The disk eycle continued with giving "modern" treatments of standards, viz., Frankie Laine's "Some Day" (from the Brian Hooker-Rudolf Frimi "Vagabond King") but for a ehange of pace Paul Whiteman reeorded "Whispering," "You're Driving Me Crazy" and "Japanese Sandman," in the same 1925 foxtrot style (Mike Pingitore banjo simulation and all). This coincided with "The Boy Friend," the British imported legit musieal which plays everything in the deadpan Jazz Age era of the 1920s.

Unlike the London musieals, and of eourse the Continental revues which medley their scores, Broadway shows are jealous of their 100% originality, so it was unusual for Dorothy Fields and Arthur Schwartz to ineludе an old Harry Carroll tune, "By the Beautiful Sea," besides utilizing it as the title of the Shirley Booth musical. They fashioned a counterpoint melody to "Sea," in the same idiom of Berlin's "You're Just in Love" (from "Call Me Madam") and Frank Loesser's "Baby, It's Cold Outside."

Big Year for ASCAP, BMI

The ASCAP songwriters' suit, sparked by Schwartz, against the broadcasters and Broadcast Musie Inc., was continuing with its legal processes of examination before trial and the like. Meantime BMI had a banner year with a $5,000,000 royalty melon.

The American Society of Composers, Authors & Publishers celebrated its 40th anniversary with (1), sundry radio-tv salutes and broadcasts; (2), an impressive 144-page special Anniversary Number in VARIETY; and (3) with a peak $16,000,000 royalty dividend. Stanley Adams was reelected prez of the Society.

Richard Adler and Jerry Ross ("Pajama Game") were the new wonder boys of the music business with "Hey There" (Rosemary Clooney's Columbia platter) eclipsing their own "Hernando's Hideaway" as a click. And that other hot newcomer Bob Merrili left Joy Music to go into business for himself. Another George and Eddie Joy schism saw Joe Csida and Charles Grean departing the Joys to become indie music publishers. Another new indie was George Pincus, ex-Shapiro-Bernstein.

From Boston's Storyville to Hollywood's Zardi's, with New York's Basin Street and Birdland in between, the "cool" set were in high. Dave Brubeck made a Time cover, and the progressive jazzique exponents were enjoying boom years. New York's Birdland had been dubbed the Metropolitan Bopera Mouse, and the faucets in the washroom were labeled "hot" and "cool, man."

Irving Berlin's Jackpot

Irving Berlin hit the jackpot, two months apart, with Paramount's "White Christmas" and 20th-Fox's "There's No Business Like Show Business." Production delays, because of illness and other factors, caused the overlapping of both filmusicals, but since musical pix have been the prize b.o. babies of the year, it didn't matter to the public if Berlin authored both.

Incidentally, both titles are reprises from previous scores, the Par picture title song dating back to "Holiday Inn" wherein Bing Crosby then, as now, introduced the ballad which has become the No. 1 Yuletide seasonal paean. "Show Business" was considered a piece of special material in "Annie Get Your Gun" but is now the show biz thematic, just as Berlin's "Count Your Blessings," a sleeper from the "White Christmas" film seore, looms to become a seasonal standard for Thanksgiving and Xmas. Berlin detailed that the public always deeides and there's no telling from whence emerge favorite standards. His "Easter Parade" was a sleeper out of an old Musie Box Revue "which score, incidentally," says Berlin, "all the N. Y. drama critics panned as 'most uninspired' and 'dull.' And to just prove that nobody knows, least of all me, not only did 'Easter Parade' come from it but I've another standard, 'Heat Wave.' So you see, there's no telling where a hit will come from. I wrote 'A Pretty Girl Is Like a Melody' as an incidental 'beauty parade' number for a Ziegfeld Follies and, of course, today it's the thematic of every beauty pageant. I wrote 'Always' as a serenade to my wife, and it has taken its place with 'O Promise Me' and 'I Love You Truly' as a serenade at weddings and the like."

In the quest for a "standard," Christmas songs are money-in-the-bank if they're of the ealibre of "White Christmas." Johnny Marks' "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer," "Winter Wonderland" and so, comes the Fourth of July, the boys usually start making rahrah with the Xmas songs. There are periodie flashes like Eartha Kitt's "Santa Baby" last year (an attempt with an updated version "bombed") and Jimmy Boyd, who elicked two years ago with "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus," repeating with "I Saw Mama Doing the Mambo with you Know You Know Who," a sort of sequel. "I Want Eddie Fisher for Christmas" (Betty Johnson on New Dise label) and "Dig That Crazy Santa Claus" (Ralph Marterie's Mercury platter) and "Santa Claus Mambo" (Bill Darnei on Label X) were in the idiom of the day. Perry Como's "Home for the Holidays" has a better chance to beeome a standard but it's still the Berlin "White Christmas" ballad all the way, now topping some 18,000,000 disk sales, of which Bing Crosby aeeounts for half.

The Freeds and the Tobiases revailed as the most prolific songwriting clan, the last count ineluding seven Tobiases (Charles, who is prez of the Songwriters Protective Assn., Harry, Harry's son Elliott, Charles' wife Edna, and Henry the latter's son). Metro producer-songsmith Arthur Freed has Ralph, Walter and Ruth Freed in his eorner. Meantime the Newmans unobstrusively got into the ASCAP sweepstakes as a sixth of the clan, Dr. Irving Newman authored "Who Gave You the Roses?" (Bing Crosby waxed it). He joins brothers Alfred, Emil, Lionel, Mark and Robert in show biz pursuits. The first three are w.k. composer-conductors.

Dean Martin (& Lewis) finally became a disk reeord seller. He got his golden platter for "That's Amore," an Academy runnerup to the winning "Secret Love" by Sammy Fain and Paul Francis Webster. Incidentally, it was concededly a poor crop of Oscar award songs. Also, ineidentally, the Martin & Lewis feud was brought into the open by Jerry Lewis when both sparked a "Living It Up" (Par picture) exploitation junket to Atlantic City, and both gave evidence of sweetness-and-light from now on. The differences focused chiefly on Lewis' desire to do

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New Bait for Suckers In Song Shark Racket

By MILTON RETTENBERG
(*Music Editor, BMI*)

When Broadcast Music first came into being, it inaugurated an open door policy which offered an opportunity to amateur composers to have their product fairly appraised. At that time, it was my belief that every human being thinks that he or she can write a song nearly as good as anything which has been exposed on the "most-played" lists in the trade journals of the music business. And I do not think that I was far from wrong, since in a very short time after the creation of BMI and the publicizing of its policy, my department had received over 40,000 manuscripts. These compositions came to us from communities as geographically diverse as Key West, Fla., and Watertown, S. D., in the U.S., and, outside our own borders, from far-off Tokyo and Cape Town. The composers represented all types, from adolescent highschool students to itinerant tobacco farmers and successful surgeons.

Milton Rettenberg

Of course, the general quality of the songs was not particularly good; and I can think of no publisher who, even if many of the songs were exceptionally well written, could have been in a position to accept more than an infinitesimal fraction of the accumulated material.

However, the average amateur has a certain pride in the product of what he thinks is his peculiar creative genius; and if a legitimate publisher does not accept his work, he invariably feels that the world should see it nevertheless, and that the world should know the name of its creator.

It is this state of mind which makes the amateur the easy prey of the so-called "song shark," the angel who, according to his advertising, will write a melody to your words, a lyric for your tune, and who will eventually, or so he claims, open the door to success for you.

Some years ago, BMI printed in large quantity a brochure exposing the average "song shark" methods with which we were familiar at that time. It warned writers against doing business with any people who charged fees for publishing songs. In those days the racket was about evenly divided between writers who wrote for a fee and publishers who published for a fee. Over the years, these practices have received a great deal of unfavorable publicity, entirely apart from what appeared in the little BMI brochure. National weeklies carried articles exposing their methods, and scores of newspapers in towns all over the country printed interviews with people experienced in the publishing of popular music. They pointed out what was then known about song sharks and the manner of the varied approaches to the amateur song writers.

New Bait For Suckers

As their methods were exposed, it became more and more obvious that if the sharks were to remain in business, they would have to devise new means of attracting the suckers, and would have to use a type of bait which had the sound of an honest offer. In the past few years, I have come across some real nice come-ons, a few of which I would like to point out, especially for the benefit of those who have been or might be attracted by the legitimate sound of the advertisements or the literature.

There is the so-called "agent" who offers to represent the amateur and who *guarantees* results. His fee runs from $20 to $150, and if in 30 to 60 days he finds himself unable to "place" your song with a "legitimate" publisher, he promises to *return every cent of your money*. On the other hand, if your song does become a success, he asks nothing except 10% of what you receive *above the first* $1,500 *earned in royalties*.

That last clause is the bait which makes the tyro forget the original payment he has made. The operation can be simply explained. Actually, in most of these cases the "agent" has made a deal with a not-too-active publisher, in which he, the agent, agrees to pay the publisher a percentage of the first fee in return for which sum the publisher agrees to prepare a contract for the song and mail it to the writer. Actually, that is the final step, beyond which nothing ever happens to the song. A contract from a recognized publisher having been effected, the agent has lived up to his promise and fulfilled his part of the bargain. A publisher does not promise exploitation in the contract and only agrees to pay royalties on what has been earned. He receives a cash payment from the agent, and all it costs him is a single typewritten page, an envelope and a 3c stamp. To make the whole thing look exceptionally legitimate, every once in a while the agent actually returns a fee and, as a result, gains enough good will to bring in hundreds of new suckers through word-of-mouth advertising.

Recording Angles

In the last couple of years, there has developed a new racket which includes certain recording offers. Here the shark sets up a recording company as a separate unit from his "publishing" enterprise, and offers to record a song for anywhere from $125 to $450, for which sum the writer will receive a stated number of recordings made by a duo or trio. Since, even at AFM rates, four of these songs may be recorded in one session, the shark obviously collects enough from four suckers to pay for the studio, the musicians and the pressings, and still comes off with a handsome profit, ranging from 50 to 70%.

National 'Contests'

In the last year or so another approach to amateurs has come to light. It is what I choose to call the "national contest" shakedown. It operates this way In small town newspapers all over the country, there appears as a news item an invitation to amateur poets and lyrists to enter their material in a coast-to-coast lyric writing contest. It is specifically stated that there is "no entry fee or obligation." If a writer mails in his lyric there is a lapse of a couple of weeks, after which he receives a *mimeographed* letter informing him in very enthusiastic language that he has been adjudged a winner! And what, you ask, is the prize? Believe it or not, the lucky winner is given the opportunity to collaborate with a "real professional" composer, who will develop the material into a complete song! Unbelievable, isn't it? The composer (the shark) is terribly excited at the prospect himself, so much so in fact, that he is going to great expense to see that the material is exploited. All he asks is that the "winner" of the contest send him $40 to help defray expenses of publicity and exploiting! Strangely enough, this "real professional" is usually a hack writer unknown to any of the successful publishing houses. And yet, I actually have erorespondence from people who have fallen for this and have willingly parted with the money just to see their name in print on a cheaply-made offset copy of a lead sheet.

I have never come across one of these "great professionals" who ever wrote a real hit. The only one whom I can recall who ever came close to it was a writer who had a one-third interest in a fairly popular song written in 1918. He didn't get into the racket until several years later, when he found out that he did not have enough talent to make a living as a legitimate songwriter. All I can continue to repeat are the words of Virgil plus a line of my own: "I fear the Greeks bearing gifts, and I hope you amateur songwriters do, too."

LAWRENCE WELK
and his
CHAMPAGNE MUSIC
173d Consecutive Week, Aragon Ballroom, Santa Monica, Calif.
Exclusively on Coral Records
Latest Album
VIENNESE WALTZES
(For Dancing)

A Practical Catechism For Lyrical Neophytes

By AL STILLMAN

Q. Why would you go to Chicago?

A. To see State St., that great st.

Q. Did that trip to the moon on gossamer wings amount to much?

A. No, it was just one of those things.

Al Stillman

Q. What kind of jewelry would you like to see on, but can't afford to give, baby?

A. Diamond bracelets Woolworth doesn't sell.

Q. Who in your estimation would make an unresponsive witness to a congressional investigation?

A. Ol' Man River.

Q. Why?

A. He don't say nothin'.

Q. What rhymes with time?

A. Mine.

Q. And with home?

A. Own, alone and poem.

Q. And with Alabama?

A. Hammer, glamour and a third word—not Hammacher Schlemmer—which eludes me.

Q. And with lovely?

A. Above me.

Q. And with dining?

A. Wine in, preceded by Yes, you may bring the—.

Q. Where is your hungry yearning burning?

A. Under the hide of me.

Q. What was the year of the Great Shortage?

A. 1923.

Q. And what was it that we definitely, did not have that year?

A. Bananas.

Q. What am I apparently destined never, never to know?

A. How I loved you, if I loved you.

Q. How much was that doggie in the window?

A. As far as I know, no quotation was ever made and the sale was never effected.

Q. What you got?

A. Rhythm.

Q. Who ain't you got?

A. Nobody.

Q. How do you prefer your tea served?

A. For two.

Q. And your dinner?

A. For one. (Not really.)

Q. And your coffee?

A. With a sandwich and you.

Q. When it rains, what do you take as a substitute for an umbrella?

A. A smile.

Q. Who is your inspiration?

A. Margie.

Q. What is your present romantic status?

A. I'm nobody's sweetheart now.

Q. Whom does everybody love?

A. My baby.

Q. And what about your baby's amatory predilections

A. They are confined exclusively to me.

Q. When you say "baby," are you referring to a babe in arms?

A. What else.

Q. Describe briefly the prevailing method for inducing slumber?

A. You count your blessings, instead of sheep.

Q. Suppose you have no blessings?

A. You go back to counting sheep.

Q. What if even that fails?

A. You appeal to Mr. Sandman.

Q. What quality in a caress do you also demand in a steak?

A. They should both be tender.

Q. What happens to you when your sweetie goes away and/or you are over-exposed to the cold?

A. I get blue.

Q. How do you want my lovin'?

A. I want your lovin' bazoom.

Q. How did you formerly want it?

A. Oop-shoop.

Q. And how did you originally want it?

A. Sh-boom.

Q. What happens if you are unversed in the more subtle aspects of love making?

A. You'll teach me tonight.

Q. And what will I never exclaim during the course of that instruction?

A. Let me go, lover.

Q. There's a persistent rumor around T. P. Alley that the words of a song are more essential to its success than the music. Who's spreading that rumor?

A. Al Stillman.

Capitol Even Working At Double Time to Get Click for Micki Marlo

Hollywood.

Capitol Records has taken an unprecedented step in shifting disk production assignments in an effort to find a hit record for Micki Marlo and the results of the experiment may set a pattern that could be used with other artists who have not fulfilled what the waxery believes is their full potential. First result of the shift was a pair of real gold records—disks cut on Sunday when engineers and others involved had to be paid golden time.

Miss Marlo has worked with Voyle Gilmore since joining the label but has not had a hit. Without implying criticism of Gilmore's work, waxery exees suggested a new combination might produce results. Miss Marlo was shifted to Lee Gillette's roster—and the Sunday session was necessitated because it was the only time he was available before she planed to Miami for a nitery date at the Blue Sails Room of the Sans Souci Hotel.

Capitol intends to continue the experiment with Miss Marlo and if the sides cut Sunday also fall short of hit proportions, a&r producer Dave Dexter will take over her next sessions. This would mark the first time that three different producers have handled one artist. If the stunt works, Capitol will begin experimenting with a revolving production policy for some of its artists.

Cap Firms Deal With Dot's Bunny Paul; To Disk Soon

Hollywood.

Capitol Records firmed its deal with Bunny Paul for a term contract and the singer flies in soon, with her manager, Saul Star, to begin work. She formerly was under contract to Dot.

Chirp is also a writer, her most recent number being the rhythm and blues tune, "Such a Night." At Capitol, she'll work with Dave Dexter Jr., of the label's artists & repertoire department.

FRANKIE LAINE
"THE FRANKIE LAINE SHOW"
Distributed by
Guild Films Company Inc.
Exclusively
COLUMBIA RECORDS
Direction
G. A. C.

Dig This 'Crazy' Record

One of the colorful "faked" records of early years was the so-called "Mad Ravings of John McCullough."

McCullough, a leading thesp of 1880s, went mad and was placed in an asylum, where his ravings, consisting mostly of scraps from Shakespeare, were considered something terrible to hear.

A young fellow named Con Nestor, associated with Edison in early '90s, hit on the idea of mixing together a lot of odds and ends from classical drama, interspersing them with blood-curdling screams, yells and maniacal laughs, and putting them on an Edison cylinder as McCullough's "authentic ravings." People bought the roller to make their hair stand on end, and they got their money's worth.

As time went on, the mad mixture was recorded by several other Edison standbys, such as the Spencer Brothers, Len and Harry. Catalogs carried their names, but the preliminary announcement, common on cylinders in those days, telling title of selection and name of artist, was omitted, to make the "ravings" sound more "realistic."

Another ingenious fake was a cylinder marketed by an Edison dealer in San Francisco. This was an excellent soprano rendition of "Ave Maria." Buyers were assured it was sung by Mrs. Thomas A. Edison! The Edison company didn't know, until later, of the fraud and had nothing to do with record's sale.

The Bopsters In The Brooks Bros. Suit

By GEORGE FRAZIER

At the risk of casting myself in the shameless role of an unreconstructed coxcomb, I must confess that my growing partiality toward modern jazz (or new sounds, or cool, or progressive jazz, or whatever you prefer to call it) was done no disservice by something I observed while listening to the Modern Jazz Quartet in Boston a few weeks ago. If the sounds were still not quite recognizable on that occasion, the face, so to speak, was hauntingly familiar. There was *something* about the four members of this group, something as traditional as their music was novel. And then, very suddenly, I realized what it was—they were wearing Brooks Bros. suits.

George Frazier

Now, that may not strike you as terribly important, but to me it seemed meaningful. Here was evidence that jazz had a new look as well as a new sound. Without being a spy for Bert Bacharach (who is, incidentally, an enormously resourceful man to have going for you, to wit—and I kid you not—his discovering that if you can't locate your shoehorn, you can always muddle through by substituting the narrow end of a necktie) —well, without letting even Bert know what I was up to, I decided to do a little investigating.

What with their sprawling Windsor knots, Barrymore collars, etc., jazz—or, more generically, danceband—musicians have never impressed me as being tastefully turned out. Indeed, with such notable exceptions as Benny Goodman, a Wetzel boy, the late Jack Marshard, who was a confirmed Golden Fleece man, and Johnny Green, who was a glory of the Harvard Yard in his coonskin coat, neither leaders nor sidemen have ever seemed in any grave danger of being taken up by 'Gentry.' But if I had been as observant as I might have been, I would have had intimations as long ago as the concert at which Stan Kenton and his men appeared in dove-colored waistcoats, striped trousers, and black sack coats. When they showed up for a subsequent date in tartan dinner jackets, I should have *known!* I'm afraid, though, that I was still brooding over their naivete in being caught dead in striped trousers after sundown. But no matter. The fact remains that musicians were becoming clothes-conscious.

7 Conservative Cats

At any rate, armed with my mushrooming admiration for the Modern Jazz Quartet, I looked into the matter more deeply. Among other things, I discovered that Chet Baker was being outfitted by the small, select Andover Shop in Harvard Square—a circumstance directly attributable to the persuasiveness of Charlie Bourgeois, fashion plate, wine buyer, and an inventive and assiduous participant in the astonishing Storyville enterprises in Boston.

One afternoon a few months ago, Baker went along with Bourgeois when Charlie drove to Cambridge for a fitting at the Andover Shop. At that moment, Baker was a visual jar and you wondered what he did with the catcher's mitts that he must have received when he bought his suits. The length of his hair accentuated his gaunt cheeks, making him look rather like John Carradine, the boy, while his clothes were, like I say, appalling. But as he roamed about the Andover Shop, fingering the bolts of suitings, inspecting the haberdashery, etc., Baker suddenly turned to Bourgeois and said, "Man, I don't know who's been keeping these clothes away from me." Before he emerged, he had ordered three suits.

On the way back into Boston, Bourgeois suggested that his companion might get to see more of the city if he were to have a haircut. Baker glanced at him fearfully that when his musicians saw the shorn Baker that night, and said, "Man, I'm afraid of barbers." Eyeing him critically, Bourgeois said, "You should be. What you need is a hairdresser." It is probably of some slight significance they refused to speak to him. Chet, though, is a stout fellow and not long ago he took the devil by the hindmost and got a modified crew-cut.

All this—the Brooksy Modern Jazz Quartet, the Andover label inside Baker's jackets, Paul Desmond's shirts from Boston's impeccable Zareh's—has more to do with music than you may suspect. For jazz—if I may employ a generic term, even though it does not always seem applicable to new sounds—is becoming stylish and adventurous in more ways than one.

As a man who supported himself in his salad nights by leaning against the bar in Nick's, I have no disposition to forfeit my mouldy fig heritage completely. I was crazy about the place and on the weekends of big football games you could count on my, as the expression goes, falling in. I'd be there in that marvelous panelled room—always on the make for the tall, tawny beauties, their cheeks flushed after an afternoon in the Yale Bowl, who conversed so earnestly and in such patrician accents about, I'm afraid, nothing very purposeful.

This man, they would say, "sort of" played clarinet, or that one was "sort of" a millionaire. They were awful dumb, yes, but, my God, how exquisite, how perfectly lovely, with all that money and those heart-shaped faces and those beautiful legs. But if—to appropriate a term from latterday semantics—"I made it" with them rather more infrequently than was flattering, there was excellent reason. For how, when you come right down to it, can anyone be expected to do the courtship bit while a band is insistent with the blare of "Dixieland One-Step?" How can you suggest castles in Spain to the rhythms of "Panama" or "That's A-Plenty?"

But that is the way it was at Nick's—and I'm afraid that it must constitute my chief reservation about jazz in the sugarplum nights when you and I were young, Maggie Whiting. Hour after hour, night after night, weekend after weekend, the same tunes. Well, what I am driving at is that you cannot level the same charge against progressive jazz—or cool or new sounds or what-you-please.

For if the new generation of jazz musicians has discovered the classic purity of the Brooks No. 1 sack coat, it has also discovered that there were some magical tunes written after "That's A-Plenty" and "Milenberg Joys." Progressive jazz has its faults, God wot, but a lack of inquisitiveness is not among them. And if this curiosity has led it into Zareh's and the Andover Shop, it has also inspired it to investigate some of the authentic miracles of the ASCAP catalogue—that is, the lovely, abiding showtunes so redolent of the departed years. You may or may not be taken by the way that a Brubeck or a Mulligan or a Baker plays—with that contrived, that collected, that blase, that almost geometric approach — but you can scarcely fault repertoires that include "Makin' Whoopee," "Funny Valentine," and all those other treasures that up until the advent of the new sounds appeared to be the almost exclusive property of the young men who play pianoforte at dusk in effete East Side cocktail lounges.

Yes, I know—there were pre-progressive-jazz groups that had show tunes in the books, and I am not unmindful of them, particularly Miff Mole, whose trombone used to weave a lovely, riding pattern around the chords of "People Will Say We're in Love," and the Five Pennies conceived of a Utah trumpet player named Loring Nichols, which enriched the old Brunswick label with some unforgettable tunes. But by and large, it remained for modern jazz to avail itself of what seems to me the glory of ASCAP. But that is, after all, as it should be. Mourning may become Electra, but Brooks Bros. does not, alas, become "I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate"—or, rather, not so snugly as it does, say, "Little Girl Blue" or "It Never Entered My Mind."

Dean of Britain's Tin Pan Alley Sees Pop Music As Best Anglo-U.S. 'Diplomat'

By LAWRENCE WRIGHT

London.

Ever since I founded Lawrence Wright Music 50 years ago I have been a firm advocate of a two-way tune traffic across the Atlantic.

Some of the greatest hits published by my company have been imported from the U. S. On the other hand, I have earned many thousands of good American dollars from British songs which have zoomed into the Hit Parade in the States.

Lawrence Wright

Inevitably, of course, the balance is in favor of the U. S. A., where the popular music and gramophone record business is on a much higher scale since it caters for millions more people, than it is in Britain.

Even so, that scale is beginning to tip slightly in our direction. More and more songs from the British Isles are finding their way into the American market. For this I must take some of the credit—or blame, whichever way you look at it!

We are always hearing politicians talking at great length about Anglo American cooperation. Yet not a lot is really done about this important aspect of contemporary life. A great gap of misunderstanding still yawns between men of goodwill on both sides, though the gap, I am glad to note, is lessening as the years go on.

Two highly important aspects of modern social life have helped to bring about better Anglo-American relations on a lower political level than high diplomacy. I refer to the growth of popular music since the days of "ragtime" coupled with the fantastic postwar upward rush of record sales. And then, of course, there is the movies. American films have helped to make life in the States comprehensible and attractive to British filmgoers, while British pictures have broken down that wall of indifference to Britain and Europe generally which used to exist in the U. S., especially in the isolationist Middle West.

Music Like Pix a Common Link

Just as the interchange of films have undoubtedly done much to draw the two nations together over the past half century, so the exchange of popular songs have helped to give the British and Americans a common link in melody.

We here in Britain sing American songs daily. We accept, and even echo, the American idiom; we like your hits and we welcome them to these shores.

Your great men of modern music—Rodgers & Hammerstein, Lorenz Hart, Gershwin, Kern, Gus Kahn, Jimmy McHugh, Hoagy Carmichael, Fats Waller, Duke Ellington, Bob Merrill and dozens of others—are big names over here. We admire their artistry and love the words and music of their evergreen hits. In much the same way we hope that young Americans are learning to admire our British songwriters even more than they have done in the past.

The two-way transatlantic tune traffic still goes on daily. Quite recently I heard a recording by Guy Lombardo of a song which is a big success here. The title is "Get Well Soon." Mark my words, this will be as big a perennial hit as "White Christmas." It is a song for sick people all over the world, a mesage of sympathy for invalids everywhere, whatever race or color. "Get Well Soon" is a song which will never date. It will go on and on, to become a standard "pop" for all time.

This makes me particularly happy, since the idea for the song came from me! A few years ago I suffered a stroke and was ill for several months, during which time I came to realize how very important the radio becomes to people ill in bed and how popular songs help to maintain the link between invalids and their families. As I lay there in bed I said to myself: "Why not compose a song especially for sick folk, a tune written just for them, one which would make them feel less lonely, less forgotten and part of one big family?"

I jotted down some ideas and fixed the obvious title—"Get Well Soon." Then I called in two of my top writers, composer Donald Phillips and lyricist Tom Harrison and told them to work something out.

The result exceeded all expectations. Dickie Valentine, the biggest disk-selling singer in Britain, sang "Get Well Soon" on the BBC one Sunday night. By the following Friday we had a hit on our hands!

Play Your Hunch

I had a hunch about "Yes, We Have No Bananas" over 30 years ago. When I took over the Shapiro-Bernstein catalog in 1923, "Bananas" was among the songs offered to me for exploitation in the British Isles. I had faith in it, but I encountered a lot of opposition here until I persuaded Elders & Fyffes, the famous banana shippers, to give me unlimited quantities of free bananas. These I distributed to bandleaders and artists, so that they could, in turn, give them out to their audiences before singing the song. That did it! The "banana stunt" made the front pages and the song became a No. 1 seller.

I also had a hunch about a piece of film music offered to me a few years ago by British composer Charles Williams. His own publisher had turned it down flat, but I took a chance on it. It was the theme music of a film called "While I Live," which, when shown, turned out to be one of the flops of the year. Even so, I still had faith in the music if not the movie, so I went on plugging away.

As a result that music, "The Dream of Olwyn," became one of the most performed pieces of film music since the "Warsaw Concerto." To date the composer has made over $60,000 in British royalties alone, not counting America and the rest of the world!

"Dream of Olwyn" became popular in the States and helped to make Americans British film-music conscious. And that's one of my greatest pleasures—to introduce your songs over here and our songs over there!

Many of my own songs have been lucky in the States. Under the pseudonym "Horatio Nicholls" I have been composing for half a century. I started writing with Worton David, but when he left me to form his own music publishing company I decided to work with an American lyric-writer instead. I chose the best—Edgar Leslie, who wrote the words to Irving Berlin's first published song. Edgar and I got along like a house on fire.

We used to spend six months of each year in New York and six months in London. In this way he hoped to achieve the perfection of songwriting—songs which had an appeal on both sides of the Atlantic. I must admit that we did not always succeed, though several of our collaborations did great business in both countries.

There was "Among My Souvenirs," for example, which we wrote in my car on the way from London to Wales. I still get excellent royalties on this old song, by the way, mostly due to the way Hoagy Carmichael revived it in the film "The Best Years of Our Lives," a few years ago. Hoagy gave "Souvenirs" a wonderful new lease of life, and I shall always be grateful to him.

Edgar and I went on to write "Shepherd of the Hills," "My Inspiration Is You," "Shalimar" and many others, but our biggest joint success in the States was "Among My Souvenirs," for which my first royalties cheque (framed in my office in London) was for $16,000 from the late Bobby Crawford of De Sylva, Brown & Henderson.

An astonishing story relating to this two-way tune journey concerns a song called "A Sky Blue Shirt and a Rainbow Tie," now sweeping the British Isles as a No. 1 pantomime song. This is, by the way, an American number which did a fat "nothing" in the States. By chance I heard the only disk that had been made of it and decided that this would appeal to the British. When I enquired from Hilltop Music in New York I learned that they did not even have a printed copy of the sheet music in stock! They sent us the manuscript of the top line of the number, and we printed from this. Result: a big hit here, proving that you never know what you can do until you try!

An amusing postscript to this story is that I recently had an enquiry from an American publisher who thought it was a British song and wanted the U. S. rights.

It gives me just as great a thrill to make a hit here of a neglected American song as it does to score a success in the States with a British number. Believe me, however, it is not only the money you make. There is more to music publishing than making a living. The satisfaction obtained in nurturing a young composer and helping to bring him to creative fruition is, to my mind, one of life's biggest thrills.

Ray Noble, for example, now world-famous, was on my arranging staff many years ago until I encouraged him to compose—and there are dozens of other instances I could call to mind if more space were available.

I must, however, mention my latest "white hope," Donald Phillips, composer of "Get Well Soon." Donald, whom I discovered playing the piano in a London pub for $10 a week, has composed orchestral music which has found favor on both sides of the Atlantic—"Concerto of Jazz," "Skyscraper Fantasy," "Cuban Holiday" and "Samba Rhapsody" among them.

Discovering talented people like Phillips makes music publishing one of the most worthwhile and exciting of all professions. Music is the great equalizer. All nations can understand music. And if my work of making Britain and America sing the same songs moves us even one infinitesimal step towards greater mutual understanding, I will be more than satisfied. For a two-way traffic of tunes will assuredly lead to a two-way traffic of ideas for peace, progress and the pursuit of happiness!

Vet Songsmith's Closeup On London And New York's Tin Pan Alley

By JIMMY KENNEDY

The privilege of membership in both those (formerly) exclusive Clubs, the London and New York Tin Pan Alleys, coupled with an advantageous position enabling the working year to be split between them, thus gratefully getting the best out of both worlds, is my reason for these jottings which swing to and fro, from alley to alley, setting down a few impressions on the current Anglo-American song scene.

Jimmy Kennedy

To the incoming songwriter from Denmark Street the initial impact with American's Tin Pan Alley is an exciting and startling experience and it takes a little time to come to grips with the change in pace which is the outstanding difference between the tensed-up rhythm of New York and the more relaxed tempo of dear old London. The relationship is about the same as a 1955 mambo to a sedate, tired-businessman's slow fox trot. There is an electrifying element in the U.S.—an urge to get on with the business of writing songs that is not found anywhere else in the world. It may be due to the subconscious idea that you are in Eldorado, the fabulous gold mine of world hits, hypos and fast promotion where the opportunity to get a bigger and quicker one than ever before is everpresent; or it may be due to the less altrustic instinct that this is where most money can be made; or it may just be the feeling of competition that is part of America, meaning to you, old boy, that the song had better be written now or somebody else's is going to be recorded first! Whatever it is, the effect of the contact on the visiting songwriter cannot fail to increase his ambition to write his greatest song and top that Hit Parade. To what extent he succeeds is another matter which now unhappily is as much beyond his control as it is to the native writer because of the changed nature of our business.

Denmark St. in the Old Tradition

Migrants or mere visitors from England have invariably expressed the view that New York's Tin Pan Alley is a fantastic place and a terrific stimulant to work. Erich Maschwicz ("These Foolish Things"), Tolchard Evans ("Lady of Spain"), Billy Read ("The Gypsy"), Harry Parr-Davies ("Blue Bird of Happiness"), Michael Carr ("Dinner for One"), Box & Cox ("Lovely Bunch of Coconuts") and Tommie Connor who made much out of that harmless incident between Mommy and Santa Claus, have been vastly impressed by the hectic operation here. Others who came over and decided to settle include Harry Revel, Ray Noble, Guy Wood, Nicholas Brodzky, Austin (Ginger) Croome-Johnson, the late Will Grosz, Eddie (Piano) Miller and Sonny Cox.

American writers visiting London and finding themselves influenced by the more mellow atmosphere of Mayfair and Charing Cross Road have stayed to woo the Muse free from the strain and stress of Manhattan. Environment and its effect on the individual has always been a potent factor in the creative world and the best place to write is where inspiration, like hope, springs eternal—and springs easiest!

The fact that there are not more British writers at present in New York may seem surprising to observers as in spite of the many hits emerging from Denmark Street, this year has not been a constantly good one for the average writer for although songs over there are still promoted in the traditional way (by plugs on radio shows, band and singer performances, stage productions, etc.) the change is taking place in line with U.S. methods. The voice of the disk jockey is heard in the land and is rapidly becoming the shortest route into the homes of the listening public, and this trend is not really in favor of the local writer as it tends to assist the imported song which, it must be admitted, dominates the British market to an extent of about 80%.

The British publisher has, however, one great advantage of his U.S. opposite number—his judgment is taken into consideration by the local a & r men and he can usually get a record or two of his "No. 1 plug" which, taken in conjunction with his other media of promotion, enables his song to get a fair exposure, or at least a tryout. Unfortunately, the glamor and superior buildup of an important trans-Atlantic record frequently defeats his chance of pushing the native song into a top slot though it does happen sometimes—e.g., Vera Lynn's current "My Son, My Son."

The establishment of U.S. publishers in London (and they are practically all there) has been of little help to local writers, few of these publishers having taken important action on British products, when or if acquired; only one comes to mind—the recent "Cara Mia" published by the English branch of Robbins Music Corp. and created by David Whitfield and its composer Mantovani, both on the London label. This could set a pattern, for certainly the hits can be found if not entirely English, perhaps in the Continental type of song or in the "instrumental" field.

Before World War II quite a number of American writers spent time in London with profitable results and many who only made short visits placed songs without difficulty. Harry Woods, Al Hoffman, Al Goodheart and Maurice Sigler worked on films and stage shows under the Campbell-Connelly banner, Manning Sherwin wrote several show scores, and freelance visitors included Nat Simon, Al Sherman, Mabel Wayne, Abner Silver, Jack Meskill, Mack Gordon, J. Fred Coots, Newell Chase, Kim Gannon, Arthur Johnson, the late Billy Hill, Fats Waller, and Spencer Williams, the latter staying for several years.

Since the War, in spite of the prospect of a change from the frustrations of the New York situation, few U. S. pop writers have made the trip and one can only call to mind Charles Tobias (a semi-official visit as head of SPA), Stanley Adams (as president of ASCAP), Sid Lipman, Bob Merrill, Vic Mizzy, Benny Davis and Abner Silver, Kermit Goelle, Hank Fort and Mitchell Parrish. Bob Musel makes London his songwriting headquarters and Sam Coslow has temporarily settled down in Mayfair, writing successful film numbers as well as show scores for the important Littler Theatre Group.

Talents Across the Sea

In New York a fresh trail has recently been blazed by London's latest export, Sandy Wilson, whose current West End musical, "The Boy Friend," has stormed Broadway. This could be the forerunner of a minor invasion by those British show writers who can get out of the domestic rut and write for the wider market. This field has long been in the doldrums over there—of course they do have some heavy competition from Rodgers & Hammerstein, Berlin, Porter, Arlen, Rome and a few other "giants of the musical," but there are signs of new talent coming along over there in this medium. Apart from "Bitter Sweet," one has to cast back to Charlot's "1923 Revue" to find a London musical hitting New York with such impact as "The Boy Friend." British writers have considerable facility for the revue style but have produced mostly a domestic type for local consumption rather than the big international musical; there are half-a-dozen quite brilliant revues running now in London and the hope is, that from their writers, may develop the next Noel Coward or Ivor Novello. The recent Broadway revue, the late John Murray Anderson's "Almanac," starring Hermione Gingold, was originally English-written and a big London success. There will be others.

It would be an excellent thing if more U.S. writers got acquainted with London's Tin Pan Alley and learned its ramifications. They would find it easier to understand why such and such a song wasn't a hit; why so much money is not made when they do have a hit or perhaps collaboration could be set up with a British writer. Actually, an interchange of writers could be a stimulant for both Tin Pan Alleys for this is one of the sectors where Anglo-American relations have always been on the friendliest footing—the British realizing that their trans-Atlantic competitors have vastly superior promotion. U.S. writers who have visited Charing Cross Road, and that other Tin Pan Alley around Bond Street where the Chappell and Keith-Prowse houses hold court, have been much impressed and particularly by the solid legitimate basis of British music business. Incidentally, here is an interesting sidelight for snobs: rather similarly to the French attitude, the songwriter ranks in the category of the artistic in the same way as painters and sculptors, etc. While in New York, unless he is one of "the greats," he finds himself bracketed with Runyonesque characters, horse-players, bookies, prizefighters and the like. Of course to many, this may not be important for songs don't care who writes them—the song's the thing!—and a half-million copy sale is sweet compensation for not having a listing in the Social Register.

Well—you can write songs anywhere and the place for the working writer is where the urge to produce comes most compellingly, whether in the hectic atmosphere of "the Brill" and "1650" or the more decorous environment of London. Long live the two Tin Pan Alleys and both will always be grateful to VARIETY for its unfailing interests in the world of song and songwriters throughout its 49 years of publication.

Music Market Runs Gamut Of Corn to Classics

By GEORGE R. MAREK

The subway started running about the time that VARIETY started publishing. And one of the big hits of 1905 was "Down in the Subway" by Billy Murray. It appeared that "There's a new place at last to go spooning." Will we soon have a song about "Petting In the Planet?"

"Subway" was only one of several remarkable hits of that year. And in the newly burgeoning record business there was already apparent one characteristic which has remained fundamental and true to this day: If you want to make the nation's songs you better make *different* kinds of songs! There is no such thing as music for "the American taste." The American taste is a tree on which all the leaves are different. Not one taste exists, but many tastes. As early as 1905 these many tastes, these many leaves, were growing. There was a demand for topical songs, such as the one about the subway, and there was a demand for humorous songs: "Father, Won't You Speak to Sister Mary" and "Uncle Josh in an Automobile." But the American public was also as susceptible to sentiment (the opposite of humor) then, as it is now, and the big ballad hit of 1905 was "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree."

We like to think that our love for classical music is but a recent love and that our grandparents cared for little more than Handel's "Largo"—as Thornton Wilder says in "Our Town." Well, yes and no. In 1905 several of our great symphonic orchestras were giving well-attended concerts—and at those concerts more than the "1812 Overture" was being performed. Orchestral music could not as yet be recorded satisfactorily—but operatic songs could, and there were enough Americans who liked them to make it possible to produce and sell "Vesti la giubba" alongside the "Subway Song." Melba records and records made by the famous tenor Tamagno were imported and cost $3 apiece. Among classical records, Caruso's "Celeste Aida" and "La Donna e Mobile" were the most popular, followed at some distance by the "Jewel Song" from "Faust," sung by Marcella Sembrich.

The point of this retrospection is this: even in those early days different kinds of music had to be composed, performed and recorded to satisfy the public, just as VARIETY from the very beginning had to report on different branches and tastes of the entertainment world.

In the nearly 50 years, quite naturally, the tree of music has grown. There are many more leaves, and they are still leaves of various shape and hue. On this Anniversary it is perhaps well for us to remember this variety of taste. VARIETY itself is well titled because it has adopted the policy of reporting all show biz, from the burlesque show to the opera. Uniformity is the death of entertainment.

The Old Order Changeth

By CHARLES TOBIAS

When I first started writing amateur prose
And my lyrical brain started whirlin',
I wrote a parody—you know how one goes—
From a song by Irving Berlin.
No sooner done than my conviction was strong
That I could write as good as he could,
Said I to myself as I finished a song
"I'm the genius this world sorely needed"
Then I'd go to a printer in my old home town
Who'd print and get paid for his labors
Then from door to door I'd keep going around
Plugging my song for my neighbors.

That was one way to get a song played
But I found a way even greater
At Woolworth and Kresge's I soon made the grade,
As a "music counter" demonstrator.
And then came a job as a new contact hand,
When vaudeville was at its height
I covered the acts—when I'd sing with some band
With a megaphone—night after night.
I'd sing and I'd sung—songs that sold for a dime—
(In those days that's how song hits were born)
And then late at night I'd have plenty of time
To gargle my throat 'til the dawn.

And then came a time when Paul Whiteman was king
"Those were great music days," some insist,
When Whiteman or Lopez or Vallee could bring
A song to the top of the list.

What is that "rig-of-a-thing-a-ma-jig,"
Those crystal set earphones, I mean,
Well here's what it is, it's a new music biz,
As radio walks on the scene.
Glenn Miller, Dorsey, or maybe Kate Smith,
Or maybe a singer like Bing
Would step to a mike, and then orders poured in
For the songs that they played or they'd sing.

And then came a shock as the movies gave out
With a gimmick called talkies—and soon
At the movies' request—all the tunesmiths went west
'Twas a new way of making a tune.

But even that changeth—and fate then arrangeth
A new change—according to plan
All hands that wrote music, all hands that made music,
Were in the hands of the A & R man.

Now the music world chatters
Of deejays and platters
A song has to "send you" today
With Hi-Fi and LP—I'll tell you—
Don't tell me, it's still plugging
Though in a new way.

Now the rumor is spreading
This business is heading
For pastures as green as a pea
So many have sensed it
So don't bet against it
A song will be made by TV.

Etcetera—etcetera—and so on and so forth
That's where I came in—or was it?
Which goes to prove, as if you didn't know
The old order changeth—or does it?

HOW NOT TO BE A SONGWRITER

By PAT BALLARD

We spent many years trying to write songs like Irving Berlin. This is a mistake. Then we tried to write hillbilly songs like hillbillies, also a grave error. Then we tried to use big words with 3 or 4 inner-rhymes (which is a nice way to entertain a few drunks but is doomed to failure if you want kids to sing your stuff in the streets.) When "Dardanella" was a hit we tried to copy it, and for a number of years specialized in "followup" songs. If a guy had a hit called "Little Red Hen" we wrote one right away called "Big Black Hen." Eggs, by the dozen!

The wife of the late Winchell Smith gave us a letter to our idol, Mr. Berlin, when we first came to New York many years ago and he gave us some sage advice but we thought he was crazy. Among other improbable things was his statement that he was capable of writing a lousy song once in awhile. So we wrote 248 lousy songs in a row just to squeeze him out of business. It didn't work. We have Mr. Berlin's picture on our wall, receiving a gold medal from President Eisenhower. He didn't get it for writing lousy songs.

Imagine that fellow! Midway in his career he created an entirely fresh and new pattern of song construction—in the smash score of "Top Hat" for Fred Astaire—and nobody can copy it successfully. And those other great old masters: Grant Clarke, Jimmy Monaco, Mort Dixon, Harry Woods and the late Jimmy Hanley. They knew how to write 'em and tear 'em up. The reason we wasted so many years in the business is because we couldn't tear anything up—like the Collier Bros. Who wants to buy seven bales of lousy songs, per pound? If there is any reason why we were lucky enough to have two hits in the past year it is because we now submit all songs with the claim that they're lousy. With this approach some wise guy begins to think you're trying to con him and that you may have a big deal elsewhere. So anybody with Brill Bldg. feet (a horrible malady) who wants to take the brushes and not feel bad, just dash up to Mr. Big and say, "Here's a stinker!" The shock might get you in his front office. All of this advice is gratis, and for the trade we have composed a poem because now we've got a new idol (Nick Kenny):

If you've never got the brush in the Brill,
You've never had a brush;
The brushes they can give in the Brill
Would clean encrusted plush.
A writer with a tune in his mitt
Is as welcome as a lush with a fit,
So why fight City Hall? Either write no songs at all
Or deny you have the knack to write a hit
(Goodbye to Peatman)
Deny you have the knack to write a hit!

THESE THINGS ARE MINE

By HERMAN FINKELSTEIN
(ASCAP General Counsel)

I have taken this title deliberately from playwright George Middleton's splendid autobiography because it expresses what should be a truism—namely, that everything written by an author is his own. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts recognized this unique proprietary interest in its copyright law of 1783, which proclaimed that "there is no property more peculiarly a man's own than that which is produced by the labor of his mind." Yet with rare exceptions, the public is unaware of the authorship of the songs it sings or hears. Indeed, the *performer's* name is so often associated with a song that *he* is considered as its originator. It is not so in the theatre. Although the name of the author may be billed in smaller type than that of the star performer, nevertheless his name always appears, and he shares in the credit —or stigma—attaching to the play or motion picture.

If a song belongs to him who wrote it, there would seem to be no reason why the author cannot proclaim his proprietary interest wherever the song goes. Authors have no difficulty in persuading publishers to feature their names on the copies of sheet music. That is within the author's control because he has full liberty of contract with respect to the publication of copies of his work. No one may publish a song in sheet music form without entering into an agreement with the author. Unfortunately, and quite illogically, composers and authors of musical works are denied similar liberty of contract with respect to recordings of their brain children, be they songs or symphonies, rhythm & blues numbers, or tone poems.

Why is there an exception in the case of phonograph record manufacturers and jukebox operators? Why may the former upon the payment of 2c per record disregard the writer as a human being and record his work willy nilly without so much as even consulting the writer? And why is the jukebox manufacturer so bold as to supply strips to identify a song merely by listing its title and the name of the performer without even a nod in the direction of the writers? In this case, insult is added to injury. The writers receive no part of the nickel or dime paid by the public for each performance. A single vinylite record may be played 2,000 times at a cost of $100 to $200 to the public. The writers of the recorded song do not receive even a fraction of a cent out of this payment. Yet the consideration for these payments to the jukebox oprators is solely the performance of the song created by the writers. Not only are the writers denied payment, another's name than his own (that of the performer) is solely identified with the song. Thus he not only suffers a financial injury, but is denied the very recognition which is the mainspring of most human accomplishments.

How did this come about? What are its consequences? What can be done to remedy the situation?

Pre-1909 Competitive Situation

Before 1909, the copyright law did not protect authors against the unauthorized manufacture of recordings of their works. The law then in effect had been written in 1873, when phonograph records and piano rolls were unknown. Sheet music was the medium through which the public enjoyed new songs. Not only were there no phonographs in 1873; there were no radios, television sets or automobiles. Home entertainment revolved around the piano—and sheet music was indispensable. No one's name was connected with a song except that of the writer because sheet music was the primary medium for acquainting the public with a song; and publishers of that music did not have that disregard for the authors' identity which later developed with jukeboxes and their manufacturers and operators who never deal with composers; and with those a&r men who scoff at melody as an oldfashioned attribute of songs.

To turn back to the situation presented to Congress in 1909, when it sought to revise the copyright law in conformity with the new inventions of that day, the competitive situation among manufacturers of music rolls was so paramount that the dignity of authorship was wholly lost sight of. Congress enacted a law recognizing that authors were entitled to be paid when their musical works were adapted to instruments serving to reproduce them mechanically; but in doing so it attempted to protect the smaller piano roll companies against a possible monopoly on the part of the then giant Aeolian company. Instead of directly outlawing monopolistic practices by music roll manufacturers, Congress adopted a scheme which had no precedent in American legislation, and which has plagued authors with ever greater severity as the mechanization of music has diminished sales of sheet music almost to the vanishing point.

The legislative scheme adopted in 1909 has since become known as the compulsory license. Once an author permits the recording of his musical composition, the law permits any other company to record it on payment of 2c. There is no obligation to enter into an agreement with the author or publisher; nor is there any requirement to insure actual payment of even the 2 cents. Any law that values all musical works equally at 2 cents without distinguishing between the quality of the works or the reputation of the writers must evidence either a lack of understanding of the writer as a human being, or a contempt for his output. Certainly the 1909 law was a far cry from the pronouncement made more than a century earlier to the effect that there is no property more peculiarly a man's than that produced by the labor of his mind. The writers in 1909 could hardly complain at such treatment. After all, they had previously received nothing whatsoever. Wasn't half a loaf better than nothing?

We may quarrel with the reasons given for this compulsory license provision, or attack the logic of penalizing authors as a means of protecting one manufacturer against the threatened unlawful practices of another, but we must remember that in 1909, authorship had not yet become a substantial profession in the U. S. The 1909 law seemed appropriate at the time it was enacted. The compulsory license provision at least recognized *some* right in the author—that is the right to receive payment, albeit an arbitrary one, for the recording of his works. But there was one provision of the 1909 law that has been interpreted as robbing the writer of what he had theretofore enjoyed. I refer to the provision that a performance by means of a coin-operated machine shall not be deemed to be a public performance for profit. Before 1909, the author's right to control *all* public performances of his works was absolute. This conformed to the almost universal doctrine then and now prevailing throughout the enlightened world. The 1909 revision for the first time introduced the concept that only those public performances of musical compositions which are *for profit* are within the scope of copyright protection. And then it added that performances by means of coin-operated machines shall not be deemed to be public performances for profit unless a fee is charged for admission to the premise where the performance occurs. The only explanation for this given by the Congressional Committee was that such performances in penny parlors tended to advertise the songs—a flimsy excuse for despoiling the author of property that is so peculiarly his own, in favor of the operator of a honky tonk.

In 1909, this was only a slight invasion of an author's rights. What if he failed to collect from penny parlors? After all, no one had yet actually paid anything to the composers for the privilege of giving public performanees of musical compositions in the U. S. No one then dreamed of the invention of the modern jukebox a quarter of a century later, and its development into an industry having an annual income in excess of $500,000,000. If anyone had told Congress in 1909 that this provision might exempt the largest single commercial user of music from payment—and that this user, in addition, would refuse to give the authors that recognition to which in all common decency they are entitled, namely an acknowledgment of authorship—they would have been scorned and derided. After all, did not the testimony show that the penny parlors advertised both the song and its writer? But no statute could prescribe that the business practices and technical developments of 1909 would continue unchanged.

The coin-operated machine has moved out of the penny parlor, and into bars, grills, taverns and restaurants. It has even displaced live music in many establishments. The price for a single rendition has risen from a penny to a nickel, and is fast becoming a dime. It is no longer a novelty; it is big business. Yet the writers of the songs who make this profitable enterprise possible are wholly ignored.

This invasion of author's rights by the jukebox industry has led to other abuses. In defending the exemption of performances by coin machines, the artist & repertoire chief of one of the largest record manufacturers went so far as to claim that songs are successful, not because of their innate qualities—melody or lyric (or the happy combination of both)—but rather because of a special gimmick invented by this recording genius. It is regrettable that among those who hold in the palms of their hands the destinies of the composers and authors of the music of our day, there is so little respect for melody and for our talented contemporaries who produce it. Can this account for some of the inferior product that is passed off as popular music today?

The jukeboxes never mention the names of the composer and author. If the public had the means of coupling the titles of their favorite songs with the names of their writers, is it not possible that the quality of popular songs would be improved? If the public were allowed to know who writes each song, it might demand the works of its favorite *writers* as it now demands performances by its favorite *artists*. By and large, the level of public intelligence is far higher than the product often fed to it would seem to indicate. But the public must be given full information in order to make an intelligent choice—to make its voice felt. It should certainly be told the names of those who write its songs just as it is supplied with the trademark of its tangible purchases. Might not the repeal of the so-called jukebox exemption be a step in this direction? At least it would give the writers a chance to insist on a disclosure of their identities. And should not the compulsory license provision which applies to the manufacture of phonograph records be re-examined in the light of the complete disregard of the composer and his work which has been evinced by at least one prominent figure in the recording industry?

These questions seem appropriate as the new Congress is about to convene. They are posed here as a result of personal observations and do not necessarily reflect the thoughts of any group.

WHAT IS A FOLK SONG?

By BURL IVES

"What Is a Folk Song?" is the question I am most frequently asked.

Folk Music is difficult to define. Attempts are made to define it by distinguishing it from composed music, classical or popular. Sometimes it is defined in terms of the place where it can be heard—only in the home, or at special small gatherings, not in the concert hall, music hall or on the radio. You will also hear it said that the instruments on which this music is played (the fiddle, the accordion, the harmonica or the banjo) are non-professional instruments.

It is this latter statement that leads us in the truer direction, because it points out the essential fact that it is music played by non-professionals. No matter on what instrument played, no matter where played, no matter how composed, folk music defined in terms of its non-professional dimensions has individual characteristics imposed by the player, changed by the player.

In other words, no matter what its origin, folk music becomes a part of the people, the folk, who have moulded it and made it their own by imposing their individual and collective mark upon it.

Now songs are, roughly, of two kinds: The songs sung at us (and we enjoy these as a performance) and the songs sung by us. Of course, these two categories overlap. But it helps us think of what a folk song is, if we say that the folk song is a song sung by us.

Thus any song, if taken up by the people of an area, and made a part of their singing and musical expression becomes a folk song.

Yet this is not all that a folk song is. For we sing many currently popular songs for a few months and forget them. A folk song has to have lasting power. It must convey truth: be a meaningful personal or social or group experience.

You are aware, by now, that I am giving you a non-scientific definition of what a folk song can be. But this is the best I can do when I think in terms of both past and present—and I must include the present in my definition of the folk song. A vital people are a singing people, and a vital people have current experiences out of which musical expression must come. This musical expression will be a folk song. This is what folk songs of the past were and are. They are the great bulk of songs created before the days of radio and the music hall. Small groups of people who shared an experience, like cattle-raising or railroading, would get together and one or more among them would create a song. Always a spontaneous song, growing out of the situation—sometimes a good song musically, sometimes not. But in every case an honest musical expression and therefore a folk song.

Folk songs have dramatized our growth as a nation for us, and help give us stature in our own eyes. This is always a comforting thing and I do not think they will fall into limbo again. As a matter of fact, the six Encyclopaedia albums, called "Historical America in Song," is used in schools and colleges, coordinated with courses in geography, history, music, literature and sociology. Educators report they are performing a valuable function. By dramatizing and making personally vivid events that would otherwise be merely textbook episodes to most students, folk songs are creating real and well-based pride in America's past and present. This may be their most important function today, together with the fact that through recordings and shortwave broadcasts they are winning admiration for native American folk music abroad. A more proper evaluation of our cultural background than was ever held in those parts of the world before, follows naturally.

For us, here at home, the function of our folk songs is even more important. Folk songs are the articulated expression of the experiences of a people (a nation). These songs are a shared heritage, and when the people of a country can sing of these things together, it can only strengthen their national bonds. One of the cohesive things that make a family a family are the little private jokes and common memories that the members share. So it is with our country, and folk songs are very important to us for this reason.

U.S. Disk Names Boom Brit. Vaude In Sticks

By HARRY REGENSBERG

London.

The shortening of the vaudeville season at the London Palladium has proved a boom to several provincial towns. It has afforded them an opportunity, which they previously did not have, of seeing in person many American top diskers and other big names.

Despite the necessity of raising the prices of admission by as much as 50%, the response has been more than worthwhile, with the intake often exceeding more than double the average figures. Some houses, which barely touched the $4,000 mark weekly have jumped to nearer $10,000. Cheaper vaude houses still rely on second-rate revues, plus mediocre humor, providing they include some undressed femmes.

England, not counting the London Palladium, can provide a steady 20 weeks for an American topnotcher; while the medium-priced acts can even do as much as 36 weeks consecutively.

These dates are made up as follows. Moss Empires, bossed by Palladium's Val Parnell, top it with 12 weeks; Stoll Theatres have six weeks. Then there are picture theatres which occasionally dispense with pics for live entertainment. Of these, Associated British Cinemas have five weeks; Odeon and Gaumont between them also five weeks, with the Bernstein's Granadas another four weeks. There are also four indie houses, the Hippodrome, Coventry; Opera House, Belfast; Theatre Royal, Dublin, and Hippodrome, Dudley.

These by no means exhaust the potentialities of the imported talent. There are many other spots. Summer camps, which last for five months each year, rely on vaude talent as part of their schedule to provide relaxation for their customers with the Sunday shows being particularly studded with name acts. Impresarios Harold Fielding and Edward W. Jones also make use of quite a few American diskers and other stars for one-night stands, with Fielding also running a couple of full-week spots.

Park & Fair Dates

Parks, fairs and fetes are other types of entertainments absorbing quite a number of medium priced acts for about six months in the year. And that is not all, by any means. A good number of English and American acts are also used by U. S. and British armed forces in the East, and as it often happens, a good many of these acts get 10 weeks consecutively with each and when they prove a hit, as is often the case, they are good for a quick repeat.

There is no doubt that the inclement weather during the past summer has proved a bonanza to show biz as a whole at most resorts, with holiday makers having been compelled to take cover at vaude and picture houses. Some resort towns were even forced to put on extra matinees to cater for the special demand. For the first time in many decades, some provincial and even suburban houses, which used to close for some part of the summer, are now keeping open for the entire year.

Import of top diskers has been a great factor in creating a new clientele. They are the teenagers who rarely patronized vaude, but now given the taste of it, to them a new form of entertainment, have become regular habitues, having changed over from dancehalls and cinemas.

While vaude is almost defunct in the U. S. it is still a thriving industry in England, and what has kept it alive to a very great extent is due mainly to the importation of American names.

There have been quite a few discoveries in the last year or so. Benny Hill, whom the BBC can take the entire credit for having found, has been packing 'em everywhere he has played, with the result that Bernard Delfont, the West End impresario, has signed him to star in his next "Follies" show at the Prince of Wales Theatre next April. Then there are David Whitfield, Eddie Calvert (whose one recorded number, "Oh, Mein Papa," has put him in the top bracket), Dickie Valentine, David Hughes, Lita Roza, Diana Decker, Joan Regan & Eve Boswell, the Three Beverly Sisters and Frankie Vaughan.

Of the standard names still jogging along in vaude, sometimes with their own unit are Jewel & Marriss,, Anne Shelton, Max Bygraves, Max Wall, Tommy Trinder, Max Miller, Dorothy Squires, Carroll Levis, Vic Oliver, Joy Nichols, Terry Thomas, the Five Smith Bros., Josef Locke, Dave Morris, Albert Modley (latter two mostly in the North country), Lee Lawrence, Hal Monty, Peter Brough, Issy Bonn, Tessie O'Shea, Ronalde, Hutch, and of course, Gracie Fields.

Of the band attractions, there are still Geraldo, Billy Cotton, Edmundo Ros, Joe Loss, Jack Parnell, Sid Millward & his Nit Wits, and Dr. Crock & His Crackpots.

DISK BIZ MUST TAP THAT OTHER 80%

By JAMES B. CONKLING
(Columbia Records President)

There have been phonographs and records in American homes since the days of antimacassars. There were million-selling records even in pre-disk jockey days. But the most important fact about our industry is that it's just beginning to grow up. The record business, the really big and vital industry, is only eight years old.

Jim Conkling

The introduction of LP in 1948 and the subsequent advent of the 45 disk have brought into being a radically new record industry. Eight years ago there were half-a-dozen companies, today there are more than 100. It would practically take a Univac to keep track of the new releases that come out every month, featuring artists from everywhere in the world. (We've just recorded French peasants and African Pygmies).

The phonograph business, too, is in a kind of a second childhood today. Sales are booming in all kinds of phonographs, high fidelity and otherwise. Who would have thought, for that matter, that high fidelity would become the household word it is today, that a hi-fi set would be shown in a film or a magazine layout?

Even with all this, we think our industry is just beginning to grow. One small statistic will prove my point: This year, the biggest year in our own as well as the industry's history, we have sold our product to only 20% of the families in this country. More American families own radios and television sets, believe it or not, than phonographs.

We've got a long way to go to match all those TV aerials and car radios, (which, incidentally, feature recorded music in the bulk of their programming!). The direction in which the industry should go is fairly clear. A new trend this past year seems to indicate that an important part of the public considers records less an impulse purchase and more a long-term (also longer playing) acquisition.

Boom In Packages

This year we've found a booming interest in packages, in longer playing music, extended programming and above all, new ideas. Among our biggest items this year were two unusual packages. One, a collection of songs of the South during the years 1861 to 1865, a record packaged in an illustrated book with special essays by two leading historians. It was called "The Confederacy," (priced at $10) and sold in the north as well as the south, wherever people wanted something really new for entertainment or education.

Another best selling item was certainly far from new—the orchestral music of Brahms. But a four-volume edition of Brahms, (priced at $30), played by his outstanding present - day interpreter, Bruno Walter, was new and welcome to the record-buying public.

So the first item on the industry's agenda is to find new material—or old material in new bottles, so to speak.

The next problem is to find the new audience. Or rather, the full existing audience. It's there. When 600,000 people want to buy a record within two weeks after they've heard it on a strictly non-musical television show, we know there has to be an audience that is still untapped. True, we wouldn't sell all the Joan ("Let Me Go Lover") Weber buyers Brahms. But they might be interested in a Broadway show or instrumental collections of mood music or operettas or a jazz group. If they just got the idea that records could be good fun.

Perhaps television is one of the answers. But certainly not the only one. There must be other media, other lures, other new merchandising ideas to bring people into stores. We're working on them.

The people who know about records, the dealers and distributors, the disk jockey fans, the record catalog fans, the people who follow review columns, they're all part of a devoted audience. And they've brought the industry to its highest sales level ever. But they have neighbors and relatives and children or parents who don't have the record habit yet.

An industry that has boomed on only a fifth of its potential market is an industry that's just begun to grow.

Brooks Off Zodiac, Seeking New Tieup

Norman Brooks is up for grabs. The Jolson-style singer got his release from Zodiac Records last week and is now peddling some independently-made masters.

Brooks cut the etchings with tunesmith Bob Allen, who headed up the orch. He made his debut on Zodiac a couple of years ago.

Soiree's Bellin LPs

Soiree, new indie label, hit the market last week with a longplay platter featuring tunes sung by composer-pianist Lewis Bellin. Album is tagged "Songs in a Satirical Mood."

Soiree currently is prepping two more Bellin packages for early release.

Internationale

Decca Records is trying to develop a U. S. hit out of a Spanish tune cut in Germany by an Italian thrush.

Release is "Malaguena," cut by Italo songstress Caterina Valente in Germany with the RIAS dance orch backing.

Marcus Heads Hub Local After Bitter Battling

Boston.

In a bitterly-contested four-way battle, Sam Marcus was elected president of Local 9, American Federation of Musicians, recently, unseating Bert Nickerson, who has held the post for four years. Executive board member Nick Conti defeated longtime veepee Pat (Sands) LaSelva, with Conti's place on the board won by Hugh Murphy. Gus Fischer was reelected secretary-treasurer, a job he's held since 1947.

Officers are elected for a two-year term.

Mayhew Joins N. E. Label

Boston.

Aubrey L. Mayhew, director of New England hillbilly shows, has joined Sheraton Records, a new indie label here, as artists & repertoire chief.

On the label's roster are the Woodward Bros., Jack Clement, Buddy Hawk and Charlie McDuffee.

Music Pubs Eye $50,000,000 Payoff; Still Lowest-Paid Show Biz Segment

By HERM SCHOENFELD

Moving into 1955, the performance payoff has become of paramount importance to music publishers. While sales of sheet music have failed to make a comeback and royalty income from platter sales in most cases barely pays the cost of disk jockey exploitation, performance money from both the American Society of Composers, Authors & Publishers and Broadcast Music Inc. continues on the upgrade.

Less than 10 years ago talk about a $25,000,000 annual income for ASCAP was regarded as some kind of millenium. Now with ASCAP earning about $20,000,000 for the year and BMI taking another $5,000,000, the ante of the optimists has been upped to $50,000,000 annually as the goal for 1975.

Even at that, publishers and writers believe that they are and will remain the lowest compensated creative segment of show business. While music remains the fundamental common denominator of show biz, the take for writers and publishers is only a negligible percentage of the total production outlay for the nation's entertainment.

The dramatic hike in ASCAP's revenue in the last decade, however, has indicated that the electronic age has just been scratched in its potential for music exploitation. Just as radio during the 1930s and early '40s zoomed ASCAP into the seven-figure income brackets, so television today is becoming the music man's chief breadwinner.

TV Topping Radio

Video is expected to run substantially ahead of radio in ASCAP payments during the next year. Up to now, despite tv's murderous competitive impact on big-time radio network shows, radio has been managing to hold its own on its ASCAP payments. The radio broadcasters are expected to shell out around $7,000,000 to ASCAP, a figure which may remain more or less constant for the next few years.

The video broadcasters, however, may top the $10,000,000 marker in ASCAP payments next year. For one thing, video revenue continues to climb and ASCAP's cut of the gross, at around 2%, will proportionately go up. For another thing, more video stations are opening up around the country and, whether on a blanket license or per-program basis, these outlets will help swell the ASCAP take.

Not To Mention That Plug!

In addition to keeping the ASCAP home fires burning brightly, video is now being hopefully eyed as a new song-making medium which will once again restore the music business into the hands of publishers. The latter yearn for independence from the disk company artists & repertoire men who can literally dictate what songs should be worked on.

The significance of the year-end hit, "Let Me Go, Lover," which was "made" overnight via a concentrated plug on the CBS-TV show, "Studio One," has begun to hit home in Tin Pan Alley. This has proved to be the surest and the fastest route to hitdom yet evolved and even more so than in the old vaude days when performers got their reactions immediately before live audiences, video, as an electronic auditioner, is capable of getting a faster reaction.

As events turned out, it was an a&r chief, Mitch Miller of Columbia Records, who devised the "Let Me Go, Lover" plug on "Studio One" with the Columbia Joan Weber disk, of course, getting the break. What Mitch Miller can do on tv, publishers also believe they can do.

Sidestepping the Deejay

The emergence of video, however, may force the publihers out of the current operational pattern. It will no longer be a case of getting a disk made, contacting the disk jockeys and the "Breakfast Club" for some plugs and hoping that a song can make it despite the three score of other disks thrown on the market each week.

For video, publishers now believe that picking the material will again prove to be the key factor. That is already true among the publishing houses with standard catalogs. Coming up with new ideas for video showcasing, even to the point of supplying complete production scripts, is a big part of catalog exploitation. The same technique may be true of getting new tunes on tv.

Another important source of exploitation and revenue for the music publishers has now been found in the foreign market. At the end of 1954, ASCAP distributed around $1,000,000 in coin collected from performing rights societies abroad. Now that the economic situation has improved in England and on the Continent, U. S. publishers can now cash in on the global popularity of American pops.

That's also a two-way street and foreign writers and publishers, in music, literature, drama, opera and other creative fields are also participating in higher revenues earned in the U. S.

1954 VARIETY Scoreboard

OF THE TOPS OF TOPS IN

POP TALENT AND TUNES

Compiled from the Year's Statistical Reports of Distribution Encompassing the Three Major Outlets

Coin Machines Retail Disks Retail Sheet Music

TALENT

	ARTIST AND LABEL	TUNE
1	**EDDIE FISHER** (Victor)	A Girl, A Girl Count Your Blessings I Need You Now Oh, My Papa
2	**ROSEMARY CLOONEY** (Columbia)	Hey There Mambo Italiano This Ole House
3	**PERRY COMO** (Victor)	Home for the Holidays Papa Loves Mambo Wanted
4	**KITTY KALLEN** (Decca)	Chapel in the Moonlight Little Things Means a Lot
5	**DORIS DAY** (Columbia)	If I Give My Heart to You Secret Love
6	**CREW CUTS** (Mercury)	Crazy 'Bout You, Baby Sh-Boom
7	**PATTI PAGE** (Mercury)	Changing Partners Cross Over the Bridge Let Me Go, Lover
8	**FOUR ACES** (Decca)	Heart of My Heart Mister Sandman Stranger in Paradise Three Coins in the Fountain
9	**JO STAFFORD** (Columbia)	Make Love to Me Teach Me Tonight
10	**FRANK SINATRA** (Capitol)	Three Coins in the Fountain Young at Heart

TUNES

(*ASCAP. †BMI)

	TUNE	PUBLISHER
1	*WANTED	Witmark
2	*HEY THERE	Frank
3	*LITTLE THINGS MEAN A LOT	Feist
4	†SH-BOOM	H & R
5	†YOUNG AT HEART	Sunbeam
6	*SECRET LOVE	Remick
7	*I NEED YOU NOW	Miller
8	*THREE COINS IN THE FOUNTAIN	Robbins
9	*MAKE LOVE TO ME	Melrose
10	*IF I GIVE MY HEART TO YOU	Miller

Gus Edwards' 'Strike'

The Frisco quake may have been a disaster on the west coast but it was not completely without a touch of humor on Broadway.

At that time, Gus Edwards and His Messenger Boys were headlining at RKO Proctor's. Gus—anxious to help the worthy cause—volunteered to raise funds for the quake victims. Off they marched down Broadway, Gus followed by his messenger boys and all dressed in Postal Telegraph uniforms (their stage costumes at the time). In those days, the real messengers rode bicycles and the sight of the Gus Edwards' messengers parading in a group caused no end of curiosity. Pretty soon, the real Postal Telegraph boys were following us and asking, "What's up?" Our boys—ever alert for a good practical joke—shouted, "Strike!"

That did it. The news spread like wildfire and by the time Gus reached Martin's Restaurant, nearly a hundred Postal Telegraph employees had fallen in line and joined the mythical strike. Poor Postal Telegraph was really disrupted that day!

When they reached Martin's, Gus and his troupe sang at every table. Groucho Marx, Jack Pearl, Charlie King and Sammy Lee just sang all those millionaires and politicians out of their pocketcash. Groucho attracted the attention of William Randolph Hearst who was so taken by the 11-year-old lad that he handed him a $100 bill. After a night of singing the final take came to $2,500 which made Gus and the boys mighty proud.

They were prouder still when Victor Herbert heard of their efforts and invited them to appear at the star-studded volunteer concert at the old Hippodrome. Among the great artists who helped the Frisco victims: George M. Cohan, Schumann-Heink, 500 voices from the Fritzi Scheff Opera Co., Joe Weber, Gracie Fields, Pete Dailey, Sam Bernard and . . . Gus Edwards and His Messenger Boys.

Mrs. Gus Edwards.

Passing Of The Topical And Propaganda Songs

By JIM WALSH

Many changes have come over the pop music biz during the 40 years since ASCAP was organized. In no way, perhaps, is the change more pronounced than in the decline of topical and propaganda tunes—especially the former.

Time was when every change in fashions, every passing fad, resulted in a spate of transiently popular numbers. As an example, if Christian Dior had brought forth in 1914 his edict that fashionable women throughout the world must return to the styles of 30 years before, the nation would have been flooded with satires in song on the fickleness of the femmes and their vanities in dress. Nowadays, when the French specialists tell the American woman to go all the way back from 1954 to 1922 there's hardly a ripple.

As for the propaganda number—well, it will come back as strong as ever should the nation engage in another war or anything else in which it is necessary to stimulate mass conformity. The propaganda song flourishes chiefly in national crisis. During both World Wars, ASCAP members, like all other tunesmiths, did their full share of trying to influence the mass American mind in the way the Government and military leaders wanted it led.

Perhaps some will insist topical and propaganda songs are essentially the same. Such contention is a mistake. A topical song is one that comments, usually light and good-naturedly but sometimes with a touch of satire, on current events A propaganda song, as a rule, is more serious and is written not so much as a casual commentary as in a serious effort to influence opinion and stimulate action. For instance, if somebody should write, as let's hope nobody will, an atrocity called "They Threw Sister a Curve When They Took Away Her Curves," it would be only a facetious commentary on the new styles. But a ditty advocating war with France because of the outrage to the American femme figure would be propaganda.

Another example, this time from life: When Edward Laska and Albert Von Tilzer wrote "The Alcoholic Blues" in 1919, it was just a happy-go-lucky summary of the miseries of a thirsty citizen under the Prohibition law. But when Harris Shawn came through with "We Want Our Beer!" in 1933, the lyric was an open invitation to defiance of the Prohibition edict, and therefore propaganda. It contained such lines as "How much longer will it take to change a law we have to break?"

There have been so many thousands of topical and propaganda songs from the days the U. S. was subject to George III that anything like an exhaustive survey would be impossible in limited space. Both have been written about everything with any passing interest, or where there is a possible violent conflict of opinion. As another example, "Your Mother's Gone Away to Join the Army," written in 1913 by Tommy Gray and Ray Walker, was simply a burlesque account of the antics of the "Votes for Women" extremists. But Herman Paley's offering of a few years later, "She's Good Enough to Be Your Baby's Mother (So She's Good Enough to Vote With You)" was a serious advocacy of the women's right to the ballot.

For Example

Having defined the difference between topical and propaganda songs, let's concentrate on some examples of the latter. Who remembers "Buy a Bale of Cotton!" written during the early days of World War I when Southern cotton growers couldn't find an adequate outlet for their product, and citizens were being urged as a matter of patriotism to buy small bales of cotton? Probably almost nobody remembers it, but there was such a song. However, its influence on the cotton market probably was negligible.

When the average farmer was having a hard time of it in the 1920s, just before the big depression engulfed the country, Bob Miller, one of the king-bees among writers of country-style tunes, summed up the situation admirably in "'Leven Cent Cotton and 40 Cent Meat (How in the World Can a Poor Man Eat?)" "The Farm Relief Song" was another in similar genre.

Ten years earlier, when the question of independence for Ireland was a burning issue after the close of World War I, various songwriters, not necessarily of Irish descent, wrote such things as "Won't You Set Poor Ireland Free?" "Won't You Say a Word for Ireland?" "When Ireland Comes Into Her Own" and "Say a Prayer for Ireland." Years later, when things were hotting up between Jews and Arabs in the Holy Land, there was a "Say a Prayer for Palestine."

Issues of war and peace have always been the prime instigators of propaganda songs. George M. Cohan's 1917 "Over There" is one of the top jobs of all time. Its opening line, "Johnny, get your gun!", borrowed from an old minstrel tune, set the tone of the piece which was one of the most effective recruiting adjuncts the Government knew during the entire war period. From then on the country was flooded with war propaganda songs, many of surprisingly high quality and remembered today. By contrast, the World War II crop was a pretty dismal affair, although it was marked by a variety of appeals, including Irving Berlin's "I Paid My Income Tax Today," to make payment of the high wartime taxes appear a pleasant duty.

It's a cause for rejoicing that in the present-day tension with the Communists nobody has come through with an advocacy of all-out warfare, bearing some such title as "Up and Atom!" Probably most of us would agree another "I Didn't Raise My Boy to Be a Soldier," which was a sincere effort to arouse sentiment against the evils of war, would be preferable.

Topical Songs Fade Fast

Topical and propaganda songs, written to meet the needs of the moment, seldom last long. Today the topical tune has been supplanted by the one-shot gag on radio and tv, which serves the same purpose of highlighting the current foibles. But, looking back over the history of this specialized branch of songwriting, one arrives at the conclusion that perhaps the outstanding exponent of the t. & p. songs—certainly, one of *the* top exponents—is a writer less widely known to the general public than many others, the already mentioned Edward Laska, author of "Alcoholic Blues."

Fifty years ago, Laska began to qualify for his eminence as a writer of public event songs by doing "Come Take a Ride Underground" to music by Thomas W. Kelly. The ditty was introduced at Hammerstein's Victoria Theatre, Oct. 27, 1904, and it caused Alan Dale to remark that the song was "like the subway itself—the words are good but the air is bad." Today, Laska says the words, written when he was 20 years old, strike him as being no better than the tune.

From then on Laska, although he wrote other types of songs, specialized in what he called "propaganda and events" numbers. In World War I he wrote a high-pressure propaganda song, "Do Something" (not to be confused with the slightly "blue" 1929 ditty of the same title on a far different theme), and it was endorsed by President Woodrow Wilson, besides being officially used by Government agencies, in Liberty Bond and Red Cross drives, and by patriotic societies, public schools and colleges, to stimulate non-combatant and patriotic activities of every kind. The back page of the sheet music contained a long list of suggestions as to how the man or woman not on the fighting line could "Do Something."

A little later, at the request of Provost Marshal General E. H. Crowder, head of the draft machinery, Laska wrote both the words and music of "Get Busy Over Here Or Over There—Work Or Fight." It was used to help impress Crowder's "Work Or Fight" order on the public consciousness. The next year came, in less serious vein, "Alcoholic Blues," which W. C. Handy, "The Father of the Blues," has described as the first of "the popular verse and chorus type of blues songs, which were a departure from my original type of more symphonic and spiritual blues."

In 1928, Laska wrote the official campaign song of the forces backing Gov. Al Smith of New York for president. It was called "Goodbye, Cal—Hello, Al," and predicted Smith's election—a prediction that signally missed the mark. However, it made a hit with "The Brown Derby" and his devoted followers.

During the period of sugar rationing, Laska wrote "I Carry My Sugar Wherever I Go." In World War II, his "We Want to Sing About Women" was adopted by the U. S. O. and the British, Canadian and Australian armies and navies. In 1952, the Government's Economic Stabilizer, Roger L. Putnam, and Tighe Woods, head of the Office of Price Stabilization, endorsed Laska's anti-inflation song, "Women of Our Nation—You Can Lick Inflation."

Still another Laska propaganda song was introduced in 1952-53 with the armed forces in Korea and Europe. It had a special version for the British to pledge their loyalty to Queen Elizabeth, and Laska received letters of commendation written at her command, as well as one from Sir Winston Churchill. He wrote three versions of a song called "Ike"—one when Eisenhower was head of NATO; another when he became the Republican presidential nominee, and a third for "Ike's inauguration." The basic pattern is known as "The Hooray Song" and is devised so that special lyrics can be written to toast, cheer or honor almost anyone. For special occasions, Laska wrote lyrics praising former President Truman, General MacArthur and the late Senator Robert A. Taft, receiving appreciative letters from all.

Generally speaking, the propaganda song is not much of a moneymaker—at least not in times of peace—and most Brill Bldg. lyricists are willing to let Laska cultivate what has become more and more his own specialized field. But the New Yorker, a charter ASCAP member, holds that even though songs of the types he writes seldom become smash-hits, they have a valuable place as moulders of public opinion, and he intends to go on turning them out as the need arises.

And who knows? In view of the way history repeats, in music, fashions and almost everything else, the topical and propaganda songs may yet return to something like their former popularity.

Serious Music: New Field for the Negro

By WILLIAM GRANT STILL
(With Verna Arvey)

Hollywood.

It has been equally a pleasure and a challenge to be colored and to be composing serious music in the United States: a pleasure, because it is exciting to be competing in a new field; a challenge, because there are always problems to be met and conquered.

Wm. Grant Still

There was a time when Negroes in general, weighed down by the memories of slavery days and of injustices, thought that it would be impossible for any colored person to succeed in the field of serious music. There was a time, too, when certain white people doggedly held to the stereotyped belief that every colored musician belonged to and should stay in popular music. If the thought that a colored man might aspire to the lofty realms where Beethoven and Mozart dwelled ever entered their minds, they resolutely pushed it aside.

But some colored musicians did dare to aspire! And when England's Samuel Coleridge-Taylor won the respect of all the world with his serious works, he gave an incentive to many of us. After that, we learned of American Negro pioneers in the serious field: like Harry T. Burleigh, J. Rosamond Johnson, John Work, Florence B. Price, Clarence Cameron White, Nathaniel Dett and the borderline composer, Will Marion Cook (all members of ASCAP). The field of serious music didn't seem so remote or so impossible after that. It became not only promising, but inviting.

When we showed a willingness to work, there were many people who offered a helping hand. Later, as our music began to find its place on concert programs, we found that audiences welcomed it. Today, it is no longer a novelty to hear the serious work of a Negro composer on concert programs. This, in itself, is proof of America's basically democratic spirit.

The same democratic spirit has been reflected in our relations with ASCAP, which was unsegregated from the beginning—long before the U. S. Supreme Court made its historic 1954 decision. After all, Harry T. Burleigh was one of ASCAP's charter members.

Today, as always, all of ASCAP's members have been treated according to their ability and prestige, regardless of their race or creed. ASCAP has made it possible for both its colored and white members to gain a financial return from their work during their own lifetime.

As between the popular and serious Negro composers, there has been no conflict. We recognize the fact that Negro music is and has been evolving from the spirituals of slavery days, through ragtime, blues and modern jazz, and we know that every phase of it has been valuable. On the other hand, the popular composers are aware that serious music marks another important milestone, for many of them started by aspiring to write it, too! It's a matter of pride to most of us that men like W. C. Handy have always been generous enough to go along and help rather than to let petty jealousies cloud the future. I owe W. C. Handy a debt of gratitude for many favors, and am sure that other Negro composers could say the same.

Multiple Styles

In the beginning, Negro composers of serious music had to make a choice (a purely personal one) between several different styles of writing. Should they write abstract music, or should they make a conscious attempt to express a racial heritage in a higher form? Some of us have gone from one style to the other, according to the dictates of each new composition.

In the '20s my ambition was to write symphonic music that would be a racial expression, an ambition that resulted in such works as the "Afro-American Symphony," and (later) the "Symphony in G Minor," "In Memoriam: The Colored Soldiers Who Died for Democracy," "Lenox Avenue," and so on. In writing the "Afro-American Symphony," my problem was to create a blues theme in the authentic idiom, keep it from losing its individuality and yet develop it into a major symphonic work. Perhaps other composers had similar problems. For me, it was unique and in itself a challenge.

As the years passed, I turned away from being consciously racial when I composed things like "Plain-Chant for America" and "Poem for Orchestra." But even there, I am sure that my racial heritage was apparent because it is a part of me, and whatever I am shows in the music I write.

This brings up a point which has often been discussed. It is true that the serious Negro music of today may sometimes not seem to have all the characteristics that have been associated with Negro music in the past. In other words, it may not always conform to everyone's preconceived ideas. But isn't this to be expected? After all, even the Negro music of slavery days wasn't entirely African. It was the result of a fusion of African and other cultures. As Negroes have become more a part of American life and have associated more with Americans of other racial groups, their music has been enriched by those other cultures, though usually it has retained its individuality. It is undoubtedly distinctive enough to make it recognizable as "American" music wherever it is heard, here or abroad.

Yes, while American colored people several years ago adopted the plaintive slogan, "We are Americans too!" their music needs no such assertion. Its every note and phrase have told its hearers that it has come from the heart and soul of America. That is true of all types of American Negro music: folk, popular and serious.

But that's only one side of the story—the musical side. On the other side is the indisputable fact that, perhaps alone among the musical styles developed all over the world and at every epoch in our history, Negro music has another function.

It has been an important factor in race relations. While the American public has become more willing to accept colored musicians on an ever-higher plane, it also has become more willing to accept colored people in general as fellow-citizens. As in the case of Harry T. Burleigh, ability commands respect, and one does not look down on someone he respects.

So, when we aspire to the heights on which Beethoven and Mozart dwelled, we have more than one reason for doing so. At present, we are simply writing music which we hope audiences will enjoy and America will be proud to own. Who knows? Some day a Mozart may be found among us, and then all of us who have pioneered will be glad we had the courage to face our problems so that the way might be clearer for those who came after us.

Children's Songs, Simple, But Good

By FRANK LUTHER

I wrote a book once. Harper published it. I called it "Americans and Their Songs". It's the story of the American people written around the hit songs of America from the first Thanksgiving Day in 1621 ("Old Hundredth"), to "Tell Me, Pretty Maiden" in 1900.

Exactly 279 years. After I collected all those old hits and studied them, it won't surprise you (though it did me) to find that with few exceptions all those hits were simple as folk songs.

I mention this because I suppose the best of all children's songs *are* folk songs. Why's that? Because the long-ago "folks" who made up and sang and remembered and passed on to their children the songs they liked, were simple, direct, naive, keenly observant, philosophical, illiterate—like children.

The best songs were handed down from parent to child, from mouth to ear, polished and rounded by each musically illiterate generation, until they've come to us as pretty-nearly perfect; some great, many beautiful.

And they're the best children's songs.

All little children and most grownups are musically illiterate, and there's a great advantage in that. The man who can read music is constrained to honor the composer by playing and singing the notes just as the composer wrote them down; but the carefree musical illiterates sing and play a song the way *they like it*, uninhibited by the composer's musical ideas they can't read.

And a strange thing. Seems to me the great mass of people-who-can't-read-music never debase a song by playing and singing it their own way; instead, they correct the composer's mistakes.

(Look at Stephen Foster's songs. See the slight changes generations of children-and-parents have made in his songs—and in every case I've observed, each change was an improvement; Foster's songs, after 100 years of four generations adlibbing them, are better songs today than when he wrote them. Smoother, rounder, more logical musically—somehow the people are better musical editors than the professionals.)

Study The Audience

So if we want to write or publish or record successful children's songs, seems to me the first thing is to study the audience—the children (and let's take a good look at the parents, too—they buy the records, the music, and the instruments.)

What do they like? They like it simple. They like it direct and logical. They like a little story that has a beginning, and knows when to stop.

When I approach someone else's song, or start to write one myself, I think of two things: 1) The truth is simple; only when it's intermixed with error is it complicated; and 2) Ed Gardner used to say about writing laughs into a script: "A-B-C it—*dumb it up!*"

So, a good children's song's got to be simple. It's got to be good, too. Simple, but good. *Simple* enough that a little child can understand it—*good* enough that an adult will like it.

That's the formula I go by.

When I was a little kid in Kansas my father and mother and brothers and sisters sang all the time, the songs the northerners and southerners brought to Kansas with them. I started piano at five, singing at 13; at 17 I was out on the road in chautauqua; I spent three years in revival meetings; I studied opera five years; when Bing Crosby was with the Rhythm Boys I was with The Revelers (we were singing "arranged" jazz like Ferde Grofe was writing for Paul Whiteman.) I sang with the de Reszke Singers on a tour with Will Rogers (Orchestra Hall, Carnegie, places like that). We sang classics while good old Will spun jokes and wound up with the big loop. I made 1,400 hillbilly records, gospel songs, Foster, standards, "vocal choruses" with name bands, comedy songs, G&S, everything but opera, 'til I finally got around to making children's records—even *then* it took me 15 years to see how to write songs and make records for children.

But I was blind as a bat to the obvious fact of "simple—but good", until I took the time to study children.

I don't know why it took so long. Maybe the clincher was watching my own children (Warren's six and Melody's almost nine). Anyway, now I have a clear, simple set of ideas and directives to myself about writing and singing for children and their parents.

To me, the farther you go and the more reactions you get, the simpler you make the tunes, the more direct the lyrics, the choice of word becomes the simplest synonym that's in everybody's vocabulary.

The Juve Hit Parade

I believe this concept is right, and I think the really great children's songs will bear me out. The all-time No. 1 children's hit of course is "Jingle Bells" that Jim Pierpont wrote 97 years ago—it was a hit then, it's been a hit ever since—a universal song that's as good for grownups as for children. He wrote it for adults, but it's a perfect model for children's songs: simple repetitive musical and lyric phrases, a simple, obvious little story—and it's great.

No. 2 all-time children's hit I'd say is Johnny Marks' "Rudolph". Same thing—completely simple words and tune, nothing smart or clever or contrived—a simple little story told in direct, economical phrases—when he comes to the end of the story, he stops.

Then comes "Doggie In the Window", "Mary's Lamb", the simple and beautiful "Silent Night" and Stephen Foster's first hit, "Oh Susanna", that he wrote when he was 22. It was a hit then—and now, 106 years later, it's still a hit—as fresh and bouncy and pleasing as the day he wrote it.

It's not easy to write simply; every writer knows that. You've got to work it over and over to get it simple and smooth and round and rightly repetitious so children can pick it up after a few hearings.

(Really this goes for any song, I think; like Frank Loesser told me he writes all his rhythm songs for 10-year-olds.)

So you've got to *work* to be simple.

I haven't touched on a very important point—using children's songs to each—"teaching through entertainment"—but that's a full story in itself.

'I JUST LOVE IT'

By ARNOLD SHAW

Between publishers and writers there is a "Tell Me You Love Me" routine that much resembles the ditto bit between husbands and wives. It goes like this.

The writer asks, "You like the song?"

"I like it," says the publisher.

"I mean, do you really like it?"

"I love it!"

"How much do you love it?"

"It just flips me! It knocks me out! It's terrific!"

"Do you love it enough to pay an advance?"

"I love it enough to go all out."

"You mean you won't give any long exclusives?"

"No exclusives."

"You'll show it to all the a & r guys?"

Arnold Shaw

"Every last one of them."

"But you'll shoot for important artists?"

"Only the top artists get this one."

"You're not gonna take it around with five other songs?"

"This one travels alone."

"Im glad you really like it."

"I just love it!"

"I'm happy you're so enthusiastic."

"I haven't been so excited since I got my last returns from the rack!"

Two weeks later, after several turndowns by a & r men, routine is repeated. Only this time it starts like this: "You haven't lost your enthusiasm?" "Hell, no!" says the publisher. "I'm just beginning on this one."

Five months later, after a record has been cut and no release is in sight, the routine goes like this: "You're still hot on the song?"

"As hot at Gina Lollapalooza."

"If the record doesn't come out, you'll show it around again?"

"To everybody."

"I'm glad you really like it."

"I just love it."

"I'm happy you're so enthusiastic."

"I haven't been so excited since I was on the back of Eddie Fisher's last smash."

* * * *

Once—and it was not too long ago—this love affair between a writer and his material ran the business. It could stir the publisher, the contact man, the vocalist, the bandleader, the program director, all of whom fell in love with songs and frequency nursed their passion until the public took up the romance.

But the day of the No. 1 plug is gone. As the number of songs has increased and the number of writers, publishers and record releases has gone up, romance has given way to 'rithmetic. And now, when you trot around to a top radio or tv show, bearing in your sweating little hand, a terrific new song about which you feel like a mother with a newborn babe, some tired program director looks you in the eye—not at the copy—and demands: "Where is it on the charts?"

That's why, no matter how often a songwriter asks: "You really like it?" And no matter how repetitious it seems, it really feels great to be able to say about a song: "It flips me. It rocks me. It fractures me. It's terrific. A smash. I haven't been so excited since the record companies jumped my last release date. Really, I just love it."

Music Biz On U.N. Kick

Cont.nued from page 221

more nitery engagements, and Martin's penchant for taking it easier (golf, etc.) in Hollywood. Meantime, nature intervened with a yellow jaundice attack that perforce slowed the effervescent Lewis for over two months.

Marilyn Monroe made news before and after her Joe DiMaggio romance, as disk jockeys cavalcaded songs like "Happiness Is a Thing Called Joe," "I Came Here to Talk to Joe," "Don't Cry Joe, Let Her Go, Let Her Go, Let Her Go," "Marilyn Monroe Mambo," topped by two old Irving Berlin excerpts, "Heat Wave" and "After You Get What You Want You Don't Want It," incorporated into the "No Business Like Show Business" filmusical. Latter is actually a 1920 copyright, picked at random from his old catalog for Miss Monroe when she was added to the filmusical's cast at a time when she hadn't even married the baseball champ.

While the Japanese diskeries were aping the yesteryear American hillbilly technique of inditing odes to "The Death of Floyd Collins," the Yank brand was more topical-minded with one ditty titled "Heaven Vetoed Vishinsky." This was in contrast to such odes of anothed day as "God Needed a Songbird in Heaven (So He Took Caruso Away)." The Japs musically marked the Hokkaido ferry disaster, wherein more than 1,500 lost their lives, and another tragedy on a cruise boat on Lake Sagami (which was overloaded four times its capacity when 22 youths drowned), with ballads titled, "Alas, Aomori-Hokodate Ferry." This was a Columbia release. Victor's offering was called "Alas, Toya Maru," and the native Teichiku label waxed "The Ferry Boat Which Failed to Return." Mercury released "Lake Sagami Elegy," and the Toel Films Studios produced a picture titled "Alas, Toya Maru," using the Victor platter as a theme.

The country & western field lost Fred Rose, vet songsmith and partner in (Roy) Acuff-Rose, which was so instrumental in putting Nashville on the map as a music centre to the degree it became known as Tin Pan Valley.

The music business in 1954 also lost E. Ray Goetz, Will Rossiter and Raymond Hubbell, the eighth and last surviving founder of ASCAP. Hubbell, who died in Florida at year's end, was one of the Society's founding fathers, along with Silvio Hein, Victor Herbert, Louis A. Hirsch, Gustave Kerker, Glen MacDonough, George Maxwell (head of the American branch of G. Ricordi, the great Milan music publishing house) and Jay Witmark, plus Nathan Burkan, attorney. John Golden, who was ASCAP's first treasurer, technically wasn't one of the founders because of some 1914 freak which saw him unable to attend one of the sundry key meetings that seemed to gravitate from the Lambs Club to Luchow's famed restaurant on New York's East 14th St.

ASCAP Jazzmen—From A to Z

By RALPH J. GLEASON

San Francisco.

Jazz has always given its followers the feeling that it was an informal and almost illegitimate music and, as such, at the opposite end of the pole from a formal organization like ASCAP.

But that's really not true at all. Take a glance at the ASCAP Biographical Dictionary and its obvious how the whole 50-year history of jazz is inextricably bound up with that of ASCAP.

Right in the "A"s you run into Louis Armstrong, who's really Mr. Jazz himself, credited with "Satchel Mouth Swing," "Struttin' With Some Barbecue," and a brace of jazz specials. In the "B"s you get William (Count) Basie, with a raft of tunes familiar to jazz fans, the best known of which is the classic "One O'Clock Jump." Then buried under the formality of his full name, Edgar William Battles, is the trumpeter Puddin'head Battles who blew for Willie Bryant's great band in the '30s, and wrote "Doggin' Around" for Basie. Also in the "B"s you'll find Joe Bishop, the flugelhorn player who worked for years with Woody Herman's band and wrote one of the group's best-selling tunes, "Bishop's Blues,"

The "B"s also produce Euday L. Bowman, who wrote "12th Street Rag"; Ralph Burns, the modern jazz composer of "Summer Sequences" and "Early Autumn"; Joe Bushkin, the jazz pianist, and Henry Busse.

The "C"s offer Cab Calloway, Hoagy Carmichael, Nat Cole and Will Marion Cook. The latter may not be familiar to the public as a jazz man, but he took one of the first Negro jazz bands to Europe, touring all over the Continent and as far east as Moscow, with a band in the early '20s that featured soprano saxophonist Sidney Bechet and the great New Orleans trumpeter, Tommy Ladnier.

When you hit the "D"s you find Charles (Cow Cow) Davenport, who wrote "Cow Cow Blues" and was one of the original boogie-woogie pianists. For some years in the '40s, he was the men's room attendant at Jimmy Ryan's on 52d Street where so many jazzmen played. Jimmy Dorsey is also there for his beautiful ballad "I'm Glad There Is You" and for other tunes. Eddie Durham, the jazz trombonist, is also listed.

In the "E"s you find Edward Kennedy Ellington, the Duke, whose compositions take up almost a full page.

The "F"s contain the only ASCAP member I know of who is also a jazz critic: Leonard Feather, who also has written a number of blues tunes. Ella Fitzgerald, the peerless vocalist, is listed, too, and when you hit "G" you come across the name of Milt Gabler. Gabler started one of the first independent jazz labels,

Also in "G" is Bulee (Slim) Gaillard, the jazz clown whose first hit was "Flat Foot Floogie" and later ones included "Tutti Frutti," "Cement Mixer" and "Down by the Station." Joe Garland is listed too. He's the tenor sax man from the old Armstrong band whose riff gave birth to "In the Mood" and whose rights in the tune were later settled by litigation.

The "H"s give us Nancy Hamilton, author of "How High the Moon," the national anthem of cool jazz. W. C. Handy, Erskine Hawkins, Fletcher Henderson, Woody Herman, Earl Hines, Johnny Hodges and Claude Hopkins all turn up under "H."

Harry James heads the "J"s, followed by Richard M. Jones, the Chicago blues pianist and bandleader whose jazz records are collector's items; Scott Joplin, who wrote "Maple Leaf Rag" and other tunes; Nick La Rocca, the cornetist with the Original Dixieland Jazz Band; Meade Lux Lewis, the boogie woogie pianist, and Jimmy Lunceford. The "M"s have Chummy McGregor, the 88 man from the Glenn Miller band, Ray McKinley and Teddy McRae,

The "M"s give us Paul Mares, the cornetist from the New Orleans Rhythm Kings who, with his fellow bandsmen, is credited with writing "Tin Roof Blues" (it recently turned up as Jo Stafford's hit, "Make Love to Me"), Chicago clarinetist Joe Marsala, Jelly Roll Morton and Jimmy Mundy, the arranger and sax man from the Earl Hines band who is now a studio arranger.

Avery Parrish, the pianist from the Erskine Hawkins band who wrote "After Hours," heads the list in the "P"s followed by the old New Orleans bandleader, A. J. Piron, who wrote "Mama's Gone Goodbye" and "I Wish I Could Shimmy Like My Sister Kate," and trumpeter Louis Prima.

Roger Ramirez, who wrote "Lover Man," heads the "R"s with Don Redman, Mike Riley ("The Music Goes 'Round and 'Round") and J. Russell Robinson, pianist in the Original Dixieland Jazz Band.

We miss the "Q"s completely, but in the "R"s we find Pete Rugulo, Stan Kenton's arranger now a bandleader on his own, and Jimmy Rushing, the original "Mr. Five By Five" and blues singer with the Count Basie band.

The "S"s start with Edgar Sampson, who wrote "Stompin' at the Savoy," "Don't Be That Way" and others for the Chick Webb band which were later popularized by Benny Goodman; Elmer Schoebel, pianist with Chicago jazz groups of the early '20s and author of "Bugle Call Rag" and "Farewell Blues"; Artie Shaw; Nobles Sissle; Jesse Stone, the Kansas City bandleader; John C. Spikes, who with his brother issued the first recordings of a Negro New Orleans Jazz Band on the Nordskog label; Billy Strayhorn, Ellington's arranger, and jazz pianist Joe Sullivan, whose "Little Rock Getaway" hit the best seller list via a Les Paul disk.

The "T"s have Claude Thornhill, trombonist Juan Tizol, author of "Caravan" and for years an Ellington stalwart; Frank Trumbauer, sax star of the Paul Whiteman band for years and now a civilian flyer in the midwest.

The sole jazzman in the "V"s is the fabled jazz violinist Joe Venuti.

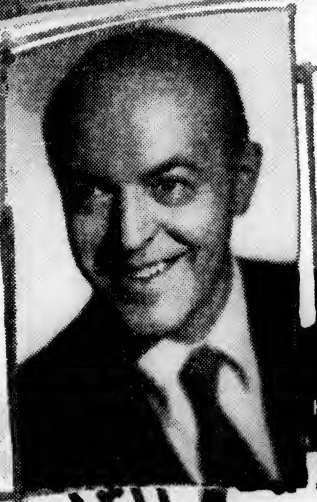
The "W"s are a different matter. Probably the best songwriter of all the jazzman, Thomas (Fats) Waller, has almost a column to himself. Leonard Ware, who led a jazz group at George's Tavern in Greenwich Village for years, wrote "Hold Tight." Clarence Williams, who wrote "Royal Garden Blues," "Baby, Won't You Please Come Home," "West End Blues" and "Papa De Da Da" and who also pioneered with the Negro recording company Black Swan; Mary Lou Williams, who wrote "Roll 'Em" for Goodman and Spencer Williams, Clarence's brother, another New Orleans pianist and author of "Basin Street Blues" and "I've Found a New Baby," among dozens of other tunes, round out the book.

BILLBOARD AND CASH BOX FAVORITES

HENRI RENÉ'S

PARIS LOVES LOVERS

(from "Silk Stockings")



YOU, MY LOVE

from

Warner Bros.'

"Young at Heart"

A "NEW ORTHOPHONIC" HIGH FIDELITY RECORDING

HENRI RENÉ ORCH.

(RCA Victor 20/47-5962)

B "PARIS LOVES LOVERS" (2:43) [Chappell ASCAP—Porter] Henri Rene, the orchestra and chorus present a lush and beautiful arrangement of a tune from Cole Porter's new "Silk Stockings." Soaring strings beautiful.

B "YOU, MY LOVE" (2:45) [Maraville ASCAP—Gordon, Van Heusen] This end features the Rene ork and chorus on a lovely mood music item from the coming pic "Young At Heart." Romantic. Piano is in foreground.

HENRI RENÉ ORK

Paris Loves Lovers (Chappell, ASCAP) – RCA Victor 5962 – Warm, moody new tune from Cole Porter's "Silk Stockings," is handled beautifully here by the Rene crew, sparked by a tender choral reading and an ear-arresting arrangement. Flip is "You, My Love" (Barton, BMI).

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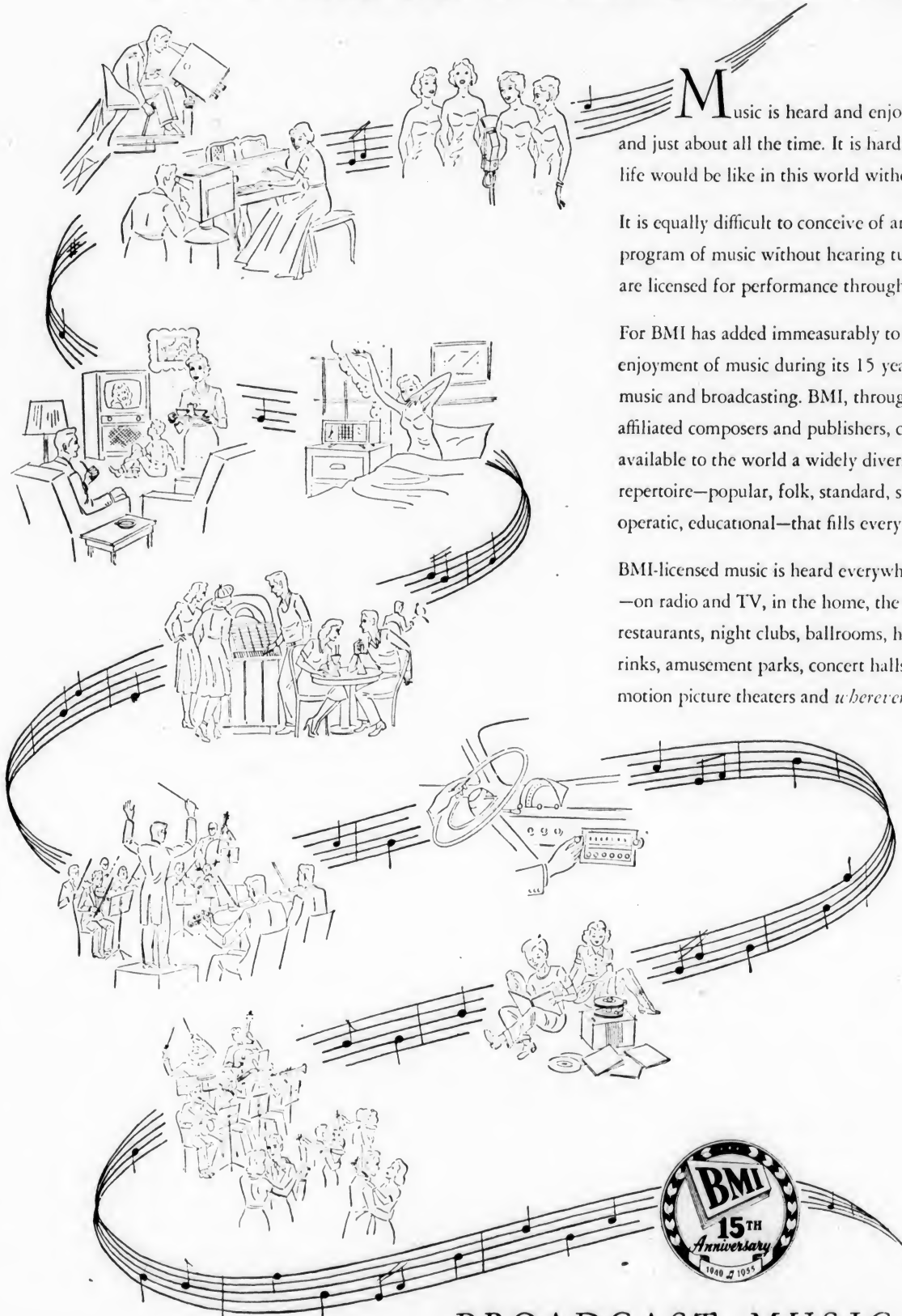

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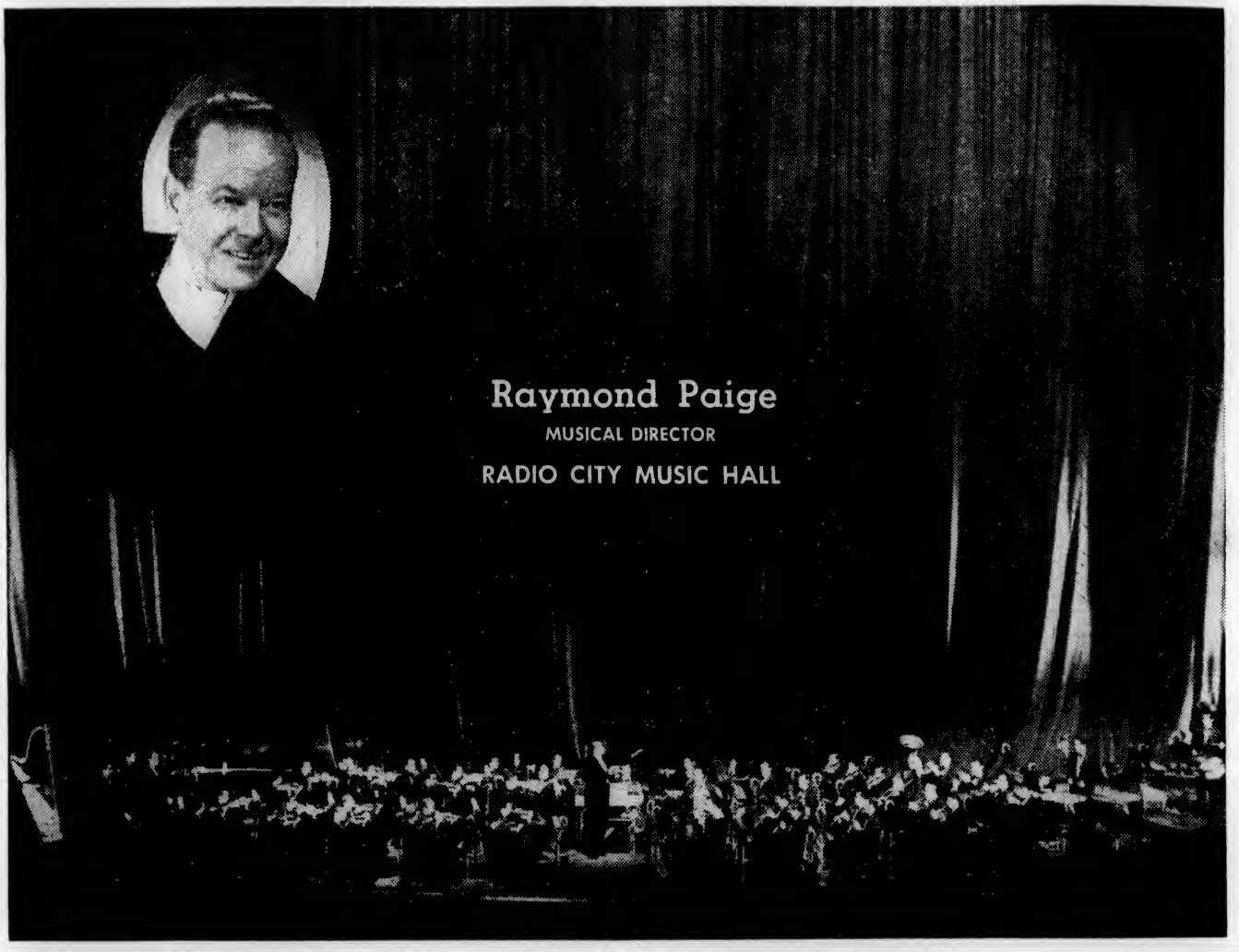

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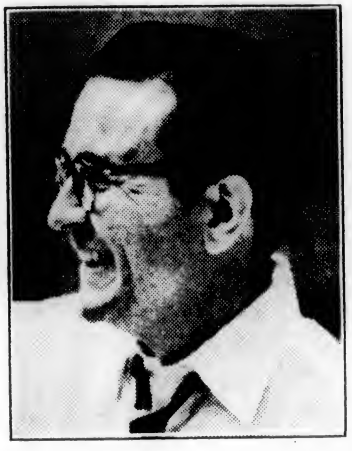

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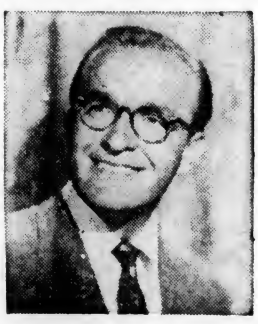

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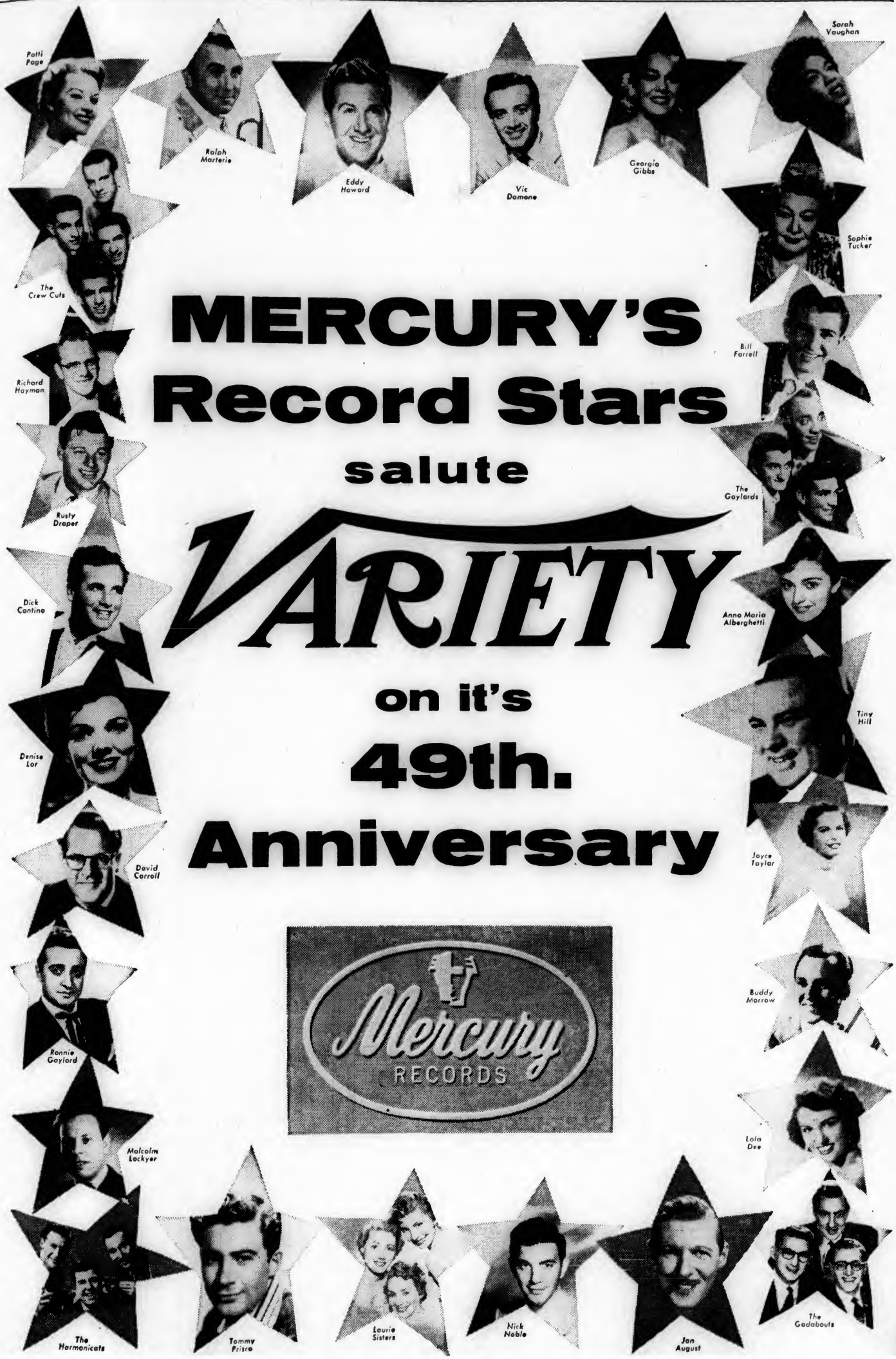

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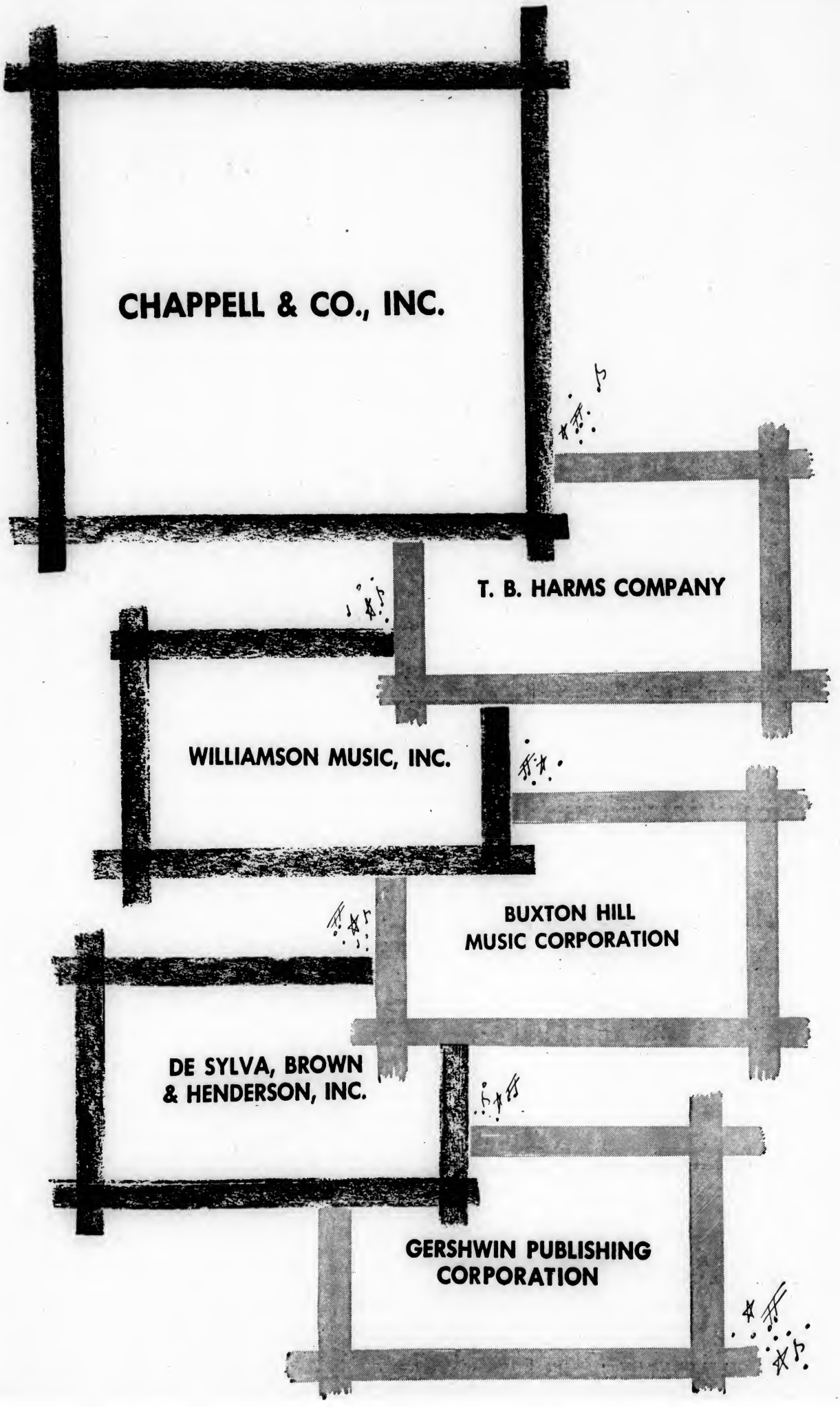
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GREEDY, QUICK-BUCK AGENTS

By JOE COHEN

Talent agents have changed along with the rest of show business. The type of operator who could take a hasbeen and bring him or her back, or a nobody and make the Palace, has practically no counterpart today. First radio, now television, and maybe Las Vegas a little, has put the whole accent on established current box-office value, something created by breaks and buildup, but hardly ever, anymore, made by agents.

Most of today's agents wait for their telephone to ring. If the cafe operator, or lad in the ad agency or the network rise to the name bait, the agents look like geniuses. The "hustler" of yesteryear has disappeared, and maybe for the better.

The highpowered agent himself created the condition that made him expendable. In selling overrated attractions that he extolled to the skies, he was glib with the excuses when the "lure" failed to deliver. Sometimes he arranged for rebates to soften the disaster that he helped to create. Many theatres that were oversold before now cannot be sold legitimately. They are no longer in position to buy anything except pictures. The decline in the number of cafes may also be a tribute to the overselling power of the firecracker agents.

However, there seems to be a tendency on the part of some of the large agencies to put these hot specimens in positions where they cannot harm the industry. Some have transferred to video. So what happened. Vaudeo was quickly priced out of business for many sponsors.

Burning Buyers

The agency toppers gradually came to realize that they were doing themselves no good by pushing high priced acts into positions where they couldn't bring in a fair return. As the confidence of buyers in the agent evaporated because of a succession of bad deals, the date-diggers adopted a different strategy. The natural and sometimes unnatural rivalry between talent buyers along with the natural scarcity of top names became the sole weapons to push up the price of talent. For that only the lads in the Brooks Bros. suit were needed, and the super-salesman was no longer necessary in his highpriced position.

The major factor that brought about this condition was the realization, some years ago, by the leading agents of the day that there wasn't much commission in pushing the little acts still struggling for recognition. More time was needed to sell that category of talent, and the time consumed in that process could be more profitably devoted to the selling of names. With little attention given small acts, interest decreased in the live forms of show business because theatres and cafes brought back the same faces year in and out.

With agents loathe to push unknown acts, the problem of creating the ever-necessary new talent had to be taken over by the other segments of show business. Disks have done an excellent job on singers. Video seems to be the only outlet that is bringing new comics to the fore. The important talent buyers are also looking abroad for new faces. It's virtually impossible to develop comics in the saloons as was possible until a few years ago. The paying customer won't take the cafe's advertising as gospel, until the boniface's judgment has been confirmed by top acclaim in other fields.

Treated Like Suckers

Therefore, cafes and the occasional vaude wanting to take a fling in the vaude marts have had to pay heavily for the creative work done by others. In former years, when a performer showed promise, the boniface would sign him for a return engagement at a slight increase. It was a gamble that frequently paid off.

The holdover agents still in business, however, have found a method of exploiting that situation. The packaging gimmick whereby an act makes the theatre or cafe a junior partner in the enterprise during the headliner's tenancy, isn't working out either, although some of the risk is taken out of the proposition for the operator. There was one instance, a couple of years back, where a package was made of a couple that had a record riding. One chain jumped on for about 10 dates. That circuit has played only a couple of vaude shows since then, having been so badly burned that the financial scars are uncovered whenever any agent will talk big money to them.

There was also a breed of agent who specialized in taking over acts once they reached or approached the bigtime. Thus the small agents, who had to create talent, gave up the effort. It was better, they reasoned, to stick with acrobats, novelties and bread-and-butter talent that wouldn't run off when big money was on the horizon. In many cases, the act kept on growing due to the momentum implanted by the small perceenter, or through television, but too many of them missed the painstaking attention to detail and the long consultations. Many didn't deliver the promise that they showed during their salad days.

Everybody's in the Act

And yet virtually every category in show business followed the lead of the hot agent in helping extinguish many facets of the industry. For example, an important offender was the booker who wouldn't go across the street to look at an act. He therefore took an agent's word, or played the same talent year after year. The performer helped when he wouldn't realize that he was helping cut off his sources of employment by demanding big prices or acceding to the flattery of super salaries. He also helped close the store. Then there was the theatre or nitery owner, venal enough to want to put his competitor out of business even when both were making out well. They piled attraction upon attraction, and then they became too expansive or unavailable, they just had to close up shop.

Another factor bemoaned by all and sundry in show business is the fact that it has become a business of hits. Nobody runs into a theatre or other amusement enterprise to get out of the rain, anymore. It's become too expensive for that. The people will come into the midtown firstruns or will leave the television set for a name house only when something terrific is on tap. The other shows can't be given away. When prices were more modest even the dog shows could make some money.

In that respect, everybody contributed his share in the process of disintegrating the live forms of the industry. The aim was big money and for a while everybody got it, but somehow the well ran dry.

Few will mourn the hot agent, more mourn the fact that creative guys had to be hit. They did the spade work for which the fiery percenters reaped the benefits.

LEE GOODMAN

Currently Appearing
BON SOIR, New York

Management
TOM HAMMOND
58 West 57th Street, New York

Syndicates Tend To Take Control Of Paris' Cafes

By GENE MOSKOWITZ

Paris cafe economics have not crystalized into any definite new shape, but a gathering in of new holtes by one of the big syndicates suggests that the big clubs will all be in the hands of monied backers, and this may lead to a return to the more lavish spectacles of yore in more spots, and may imply use of bigger names, mainly American, for club dates. Pierre Louis-Guerin's Lido Syndicat with the Lido, Bal Tabarin and Moulin Rouge under its aegis, looks like the group to set the pace in 1955. Rene Bardy still has the Eve and Nouvelle Eve and reopens the Nouvelle Eve early this year after a two month hiatus. Nachat Martini has the Pigallie and Sphinx two of the staple Pigalle nudie shows. This may also lead to weeding out of some of the smaller spots and a more stable nitery situation.

The Palais Royal threat to St.-Germain-Des-Pres seems to have waned. Now it is a free front in all quarters with club names, shows and personalities as draws. Lido goes into its new show, "Desiree," and stays the topper in spectacle and sumptuous and talented staging. Moulin Rouge retains its pop price and vaude status but promises a better production value in its surrounding show to bolster the name headliners. Bal Tabarin is skedded to reopen in July with a big spectacle, "Vive Montmartre." Meanwhile Pigalle appeal is mainly in the undraped department with

(Continued on page 264)

Two Americans Abroad

Further Adventures of Smith & Dale and Their Avon Comedy Four in Selling American Humor in Britain

By JOE SMITH (Smith & Dale)

(As told to Aaron Fishman in their biography, "Stage Struck")

While the new generation is debating about whether live vaudeville in this country has moved into tv, the vaudeville we once knew still holds forth abroad and what the Palace once was, the Palladium now is—the performer's dream of achievement. With nostalgic warmth Charlie and I look back upon our first trip to the British Isles.

Max Hart had hooked us to play Moss & Stoll's Music Halls in England, Scotland and Wales and selling American humor abroad was to be a unique experience for the Avon Comedy Four of 1909 with Goodwin, Coleman, Smith & Dale.

Before sailing we sent the management a list of the songs we sang, time of act, the props we needed, and we asked that our "schoolroom" set be set in full-stage.

When we opened at the Olympia, in Liverpool, we found that the stage was almost as huge as the one at the late N.Y. Hippodrome. The apron of the Olympia stage was a good 15 feet wide and the schoolroom set was laid way behind that. Between the eight wings of that stage they set up the schoolroom large enough for one of our New York schoolrooms, and our four school desks looked like they were lost in the woods. When the curtain went up we could not see the audience—they looked like they were lost too!

Where the musicians should have been, there was a large semi-circular chasm (used for water acts). The musicians played from an alcove above the orchestra floor where Row Z would be. How our singing would be synchronized with their playing would be miraculous.

"Boat Sails" Complete

We started to work fast like we worked at home. We couldn't see the audience. They couldn't "see" us either, despite the fact that the stage was well lit up. The show over, we sat in the dressing room with empty feelings but full of gloom. We had heard the expression "The boat sails Friday" and we were figuring on what boat we were going to take back home, and what excuses we could make why we didn't click, and while we sat there making up excuses we hit on the old adage . . . "try, try again."

Some quick thinking and some quick changes were greatly needed, immediately, at the next performance. We moved the set from full, right on the apron; we spoke slowly; we repeated the classroom questions; we improvised a travesty on the serpentine dance of La Pia who preceded us (the British love travesty). Gags that were too Yankee were eliminated. And at the finish of our act we turned a decided flop into a hit within the space of one performance; If the English were spoken of as being slow in getting the point of American humor, they however laughed longer when they did.

In the same city, Leo Carillo was appearing at the Empire and we decided to visit him. The house manager received us warmly. He told us that Carillo was always boasting about the United States. "Is it really a big place, hey what?" he asked Charlie.

"Sure is," Charlie answered.

"Carillo says that you could get all of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales into the State of Texas. Is that right?" We all agreed.

"My word! What do they grow there?"

"Everything but peas," Charlie told him. The manager was puzzled.

"Why not peas?"

"They roll off the knife," replied Coleman.

"Can't they use forks?" the manager asked seriously. We began to sense that there would be a need for reconciling English and American humor.

Thumbs Up!

It may have been a custom that the Roman invaders left behind them—the English still employed their thumbs to indicate their degree of pleasure with things. When they pointed both their thumbs downwards, it meant "to the lions with him"—the act was no good. One thumb up and one thumb down meant "fair." Both thumbs up was the accolade. We were watching the queue line waiting to get in for the second show at the Hackney Empire. A standee was asking a passerby who had just come out of the theater, "How are the bloomin' Yankees?" The passerby raised both thumbs.

To gain the approval of an English audience was something to be wished for. The magnificence of its loyalty became evident to us when we witnessed an old performer on the bill being asked by the audience to sing the song on which he had made his reputation.

"Sorry, it's in the dressing room in my trunk," he apologized.

"Go and get it!" the audience shouted. While the orchestra played an overture, the performer went down to his dressing room to get his music. With great pride he then passed out the parts to the orchestra and delivered the favorite song.

We, too, had taken their fancy, especially with the new songs which we had brought over from America, "School Days," "Sunhonnet Sue," "Silvery Moon," "Put On Your Old Gray Bonnet."

At the Empire, in Sheffield, the stagehands invited us to play cricket. To reciprocate the courtesy, we agreed to show them how to play baseball. "Why that's nothing more than the game of 'rounders' that we used to play as boys!" they exclaimed. Well, when we got back to the theatre, the Avons had to put up the scenery for the act. The stagehands were stiffly and sorely disabled by this childish game of 'rounders.'

While we had to work slow to the English audiences, we found that when we got to Scotland that we had to work as fast as we did at home. The audiences in Edinburgh and Glasgow were ahead of us. The program of His Majesty's Theatre in Aberdeen was noteworthy—it posted the timetable of after-theatre trains, offered a combined rail and hotel coupon at moderate cost, and advertised A. McIntosh McBain, the reliable dentist who offered painless extractions for one shilling a tooth, and free when teeth were ordered.

The audiences in Wales, especially in Cardiff, took the Avons to their hearts. The Welsh, who love good music, could not get enough of this American quartet. The

(Continued on page 268)

MARGIE LEE

Lido Club, Paris, 1953 Conrad Hilton Hotel, Chicago, 1954

Personal Management—Donn Arden

Insurance For Performers A Modern-Day Necessity

By NAT ABRAMSON

(Chairman, AGVA Welfare Trust Fund)

Performers have a chronic fear of the future. They dread the lack of security. The bogey of disablement by sickness or injury, with its curtailment of income, always hangs over their heads. This is particularly true in the variety field where performers find it difficult to obtain private accident insurance due to the nature of their work.

Yet, an unmistakable note of optimism is visible on the horizon for performers and other union employees behind the footlights and in broadcasting studios. It is a welcome note which will lessen these fears. For there is a developing trend in the variety and broadcasting fields which provides various types of insurance for the modern-day entertainer.

The trend is serving at least two important, practical functions for the night club, outdoors or vaudeville entertainer. Through the AGVA Welfare Trust Fund's insurance plan, the performer receives cash when accidentally injured, and is afforded peace of mind. He knows he will receive weekly benefits if his injury prevents him from working, and he knows his hospital and medical bills will be paid for by the Welfare Trust Fund. He knows, too, that these same benefits apply even though his injuries may be sustained while proceeding to or from engagements.

$250,000 Paid Out

This unique accident insurance plan, to which AGVA members are not required to contribute under the Welfare Trust Fund's administration, is but two years old. Nevertheless, in this short span, the Fund has paid out more than $250,000 to AGVA members who were injured, and has already processed more than 500 accident cases, which included two deaths. We, who have the benefit of day-to-day observations of this novel insurance plan, safely predict it will set a pattern for other unions.

Other forms of insurance plans currently provide (or are in the process of being established to provide) pension, welfare, death, sickness and hospitalization, benefits for tv and radio performers as well as stagehands, electricians, scenic artists, etc. The acceleration of the recent trend gives promise that 1955 will mark the turning point where insurance for entertainers will be an everyday reality for many, many thousands more.

The mushrooming tv-radio industry alone will take in 10,000 performers in a pension and welfare plan agreed upon by AFTRA and the four networks. As this plan extends over a period of years, the figure will be trebled and its welfare fund may be handling more than $10,000,000 in three or four years.

Just as AGVA members do not contribute under the terms of its accident insurance contract with the underwriters, present plans call for no contributions by tv and radio entertainers, to their AFTRA pension arrangements. Employers, in AFTRA's instance, will pay 5% of the artists' gross pay. It is conceivable that life insurance may be incorporated in this pension and welfare plan by the trustees.

Trend to Welfare Funds

Under AGVA's Welfare Trust Fund plan, when performers are engaged on a daily basis, the employer pays to the Fund $1 a day per performer. For weekly engagements, the employer pays on the basis of $2.50 per week for each performer. The rate is $3.50 weekly for circus, ice skating or similar work of a hazardous nature. These contributions are used to pay premiums for insurance that covers accidental injury, total disability, medical and surgical requirements, and accidental death. The two death claims, in the amount of $7,500 each, have been paid in full.

The growing trend towards additional welfare benefits is also exemplified within the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE). As the parent body, I am informed, IATSE has no such benefits but assists its union affiliates in contract negotiations for health, welfare and pension plans. One of its locals put into effect, as of Jan. 1, 1955, a welfare and pension plan with a two cents per hour contribution for the employers' group. Some of its locals have enjoyed various protective sick and welfare benefits for a number of years, while other locals are just starting out on their insurance programs. The pattern emerging typifies the experience of other unions in the entertainment field, showing renewed and increasing activity toward building and reinforcing various insurance needs for union members.

The AGVA Welfare Trust Fund, with which I am most familiar, is a separate entity. To administer its operations and monies, the six trustees, made up of employer and AGVA representatives, receive no compensation of any kind for their work with the Fund.

The employer representatives are Nick Prounis, proprietor of the Versailles Restaurant, N. Y.; H. B. Cantor, president of the Carter Hotels chain, and myself, as director of Radio Station WOR Artists Bureau. AGVA representatives are William F. Brunner, former Congressman from Queens, N. Y.; Rabbi Bernard Birstein of the Actors' Temple, N. Y., and David Ferguson, executive secretary of the Jewish Theatrical Guild.

All of us are extremely gratified at the success of this operation, and at the protection and security it has given performers, which they never had before.

Troop Need For Entertainment Urgent: Powell

The highest service an actor can do for his country and his fellow man is to work the remote outposts for the USO-Camp Shows, according to Jack Powell, the comedy drummer who has probably made more trips under USO-Camp Shows auspices than any other performer. Powell started troop entertainment before USO was formally established. He started in 1940, before World War II, when the major organization was the Citizens Committee, which provided entertainment in camps. With about 25 trips under his belt, he is set to make his second trip to Alaska on Jan. 24.

The money, Powell says, isn't big. He could probably make as much or more by remaining in the States. Troop entertainment in the remote spots, he says, has become a mission with him.

On holiday seasons, according to Powell, it is just as important to send entertainment to installations which have easy access to show business in major cities. Not all troops can get leave, and a sizable amount must remain in camp. It is important to see that these lads are entertained, Powell says. According to the drummer, many in the major centres of population will frequently eschew leaves and passes so that they can take in a USO-Camp Shows performance.

Powell says that there will be need of entertainment as long as our boys are in uniform and patrolling far areas. He warned that acts going out for USO-Camp Shows must obey instructions to the letter. All are warned to keep away from certain areas in some installations. These spots, he said, still contain booby traps left by the Japanese, and are marked out of bounds for all personnel. While the Armed Forces have an obligation to take care of the safety of acts, the acts have an obligation in seeing to it that the safety of the country is paramount in their minds. He warned performers about talking about certain installations, giving locations to anyone or providing specific information about movements or number of troops in any specific area.

DAVE FOX DEAD AT 58; STORMY UNION FIGURE

Dave Fox, long a controversial figure in the tangled affairs of the American Guild of Variety Artists, and at one time executive secretary of the Theatre Restaurant Owners Assn., died suddenly last Wednesday (29) in New York. Death was believed to have resulted from a heart attack. He was 58.

Fox started as a performer and had been a member of the singing act of Fox & Mayo when he started taking an interest in actor unionism. He was elected a board member and later became executive secretary of the N.Y. branch of AGVA at a time when the treasury had $27. With a handful of organizers which included Emil Lowe, Arthur Shields, Duke Granada and Jack Miller, he went on an organizing rampage which resulted in the pacting of about 50 spots within a week. This campaign also resulted in a strike at the Apollo Theatre, N.Y., which was ended when both parties reached an agreement. He was later named assistant to the national administrator who at that time was Matt Shelvey.

When Shelvey was ousted on a charge of irregularities, Fox left that post. He started a talent agency, which was doing fairly well, when the newly organized group of nitery owners asked him to take over as exec secretary.

Night Club Reviews

Palmer House, Chi

Chicago, Dec. 27.

Los Chavales de Espana (11) with Trini Reyes, Empire Eight, Charlie Fisk Orch (10); $2 cover.

The inflammable Kids From Spain are brimming the stage of this hostelry for their third maneuver in three years, this time for a lengthy seven-week stretch that bespeaks their growing reputation with the supperclub set in these parts. House will be bulging for the holiday frame and also in its wake when the furniture conventioneers overtake this town.

The Kids, decked in uniform Spanish regalia and each championing several instruments, dazzle with a kaleidoscopic presentation that clips at a breathless pace in a 50-minute format which leaves the crowd hungering for more. Orch changes face with each number, as the numbers dictate, producing a softened sound with four violins, two accordions, a muted trumpet and clarinet for plaintive "Ciel de Paris"; or the fuller sound of three trumpets, three reeds, and two tambourines for the more boisterous "Matador."

Group's mobility onstage, its ever-changing forefront, intricate arrangements of Hispanic and French selections, dramatic lighting and the intermittent terp flurries of Trini Reyes, all total to showmanship of the highest order.

Two male chanters are spotlighted: Luis Tamayo, a handsome baritone who woos in the romantic mode, and Pepe Lara, a fluid tenor who works in the more stirring idiom of "Valencia" and "Play Gypsy." Both have exceptionally fine voices for their slotting with an orchestral group and magnetic presence in the fore.

Bravos break out loudest for Miss Reyes, a fiery charmer with explosive heels, who cuts up the floor in mercurial fashion with her furioso gypsy dances. Gal has the plus values of good looks and an engaging terp personality that projects into the farthest corners.

Merriel Abbott's house line, the Empire Eight, contribute an attractive eye-opener in a splashy Latino production that clicks for lush, colorful costuming and light-footed execution by the six gals and two guys. Charlie Fisk orch plays the dance sets adept'y, per usual, with Lee Charmel chirping appealingly. *Les.*

Black Orchid, Chi

Chicago, Dec. 28.

Robert Clary, Naomi Stevens, Mello-Larks (4), Rudy Kerpays Duo; $4 minimum.

It's SRO here; signs are that ropes will be up throughout the six weeks of Robert Clary's stand. Clary has commanded a following here since his clicko impression in "New Faces" a year ago, but this is his first nitery engagement in the Windy City. He's supported by a fine pair of acts, also new to Chi, giving this room its strongest card in months.

Clary's limber-limbed gyrations, zany facial contortions and vigorous attack are all pius values that spark the table-thumping. Voice sells on its own merit in ballads like "Autumn Leaves," but for the most he essays French and English novelties like the ludicrous "Triplets," swinging "La Vie Francaise," and catchy "Calypso Blues." Stint is a wow from top to bottom, and he begs off after 30 minutes on the "Miss Logan" bonus.

Less flamboyant song and comedy, but effective in its own idiom, is dished up by blonde cutup Naomi Stevens. She's an engaging chirper with stage savvy and a tasteful catalog of comedy ditties, most of which are suggestive tidb'ts on affairs of love. As much of it is topical, it's happily up to date, and she passes off the humorous lyric deftly for a good volley of laughs. Act is hampered by the fact that it's all done in the same mood key and needs a change of pace or healthy outburst somewhere in the course.

Mello-Larks, a volatile harmony group of three youthful guys and an eyecatcher named Jamie Dina, kick off the bill with bouncy vocalistics that satisfy for snap and physical display. Foursome has a showmanly yield here, having worked some eye-riveting stage business into each number. Some of the intros are stilted and overelaborate, but the group surmounts these easily in the singing chores on "Coffee Time," "One Finger, One Thumb" and a terrif revival-type version of "Gideon Bible."

Rudy Kerpays at keyboard and Dave Poskonka on bass cut their usual fine show. *Les.*

May Fair Hotel, London

Bethe Douglas, Sonneli & Orch; $5 minimum.

London, Dec. 24.

A combination of time and talent is needed to put the May Fair Hotel back on the map as an entertainment venue. The time factor resolves itself, and the talent angle is being developed cautiously. Gradually word is getting around that cabaret has returned to this hostelry, and with the development of a consistent booking policy, the main restaurant should once again become a favorite haunt.

Current attraction is Bethe Douglas, a redheaded looker from Texas with a sparkling personality and a generous share of nature's gifts. That's a firm foundation for cabaret and can compensate for any deficiencies in the performance. So far as Miss Douglas is concerned, her major fault is a lack of appreciation of British reserve, which leads to an overstrong desire to please. In her case this sparks a tendency to overdo the gab at the expense of the vocals. It's a minor fault which can easily be rectified.

With her startling appearance and a handsome set of pipes, she's strong on the straight singing and has a balanced lineup in her routine to cater to most tastes. A couple of vintage items, particularly well sulted for the room, are "10c a Dance" and "Paradise."

Miss Douglas is in for a minimum of one month, the longest run yet for any artist since this room reintroduced cabaret, and the confidence of the management looks like being justified. The Sonneli orch does a standard job of backgrounding. *Myro.*

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1954

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February	LOTUS CLUB, Birmingham, Alabama CASINO ROYAL, Washington, D. C.
March	ORVILLE LOWE, AUTO SHOW, Des Moines, Iowa LAKE CLUB, Springfield, Illinois
April	BEVERLY HILLS COUNTRY CLUB, Newport, Kentucky
May	HORIZON ROOM, NEW AIRPORT, Pittsburgh, Penna. SKY WAY LOUNGE, Cleveland, Ohio
June	ITALIAN VILLAGE, San Francisco, California
July	RIVERSIDE CASINO, Reno, Nevada STATELINE COUNTRY CLUB, Lake Tahoe, Nevada
August	STATLER HOTEL, Los Angeles, California
September	DESERT INN, Las Vegas, Nevada
October	*Return Engagement* ITALIAN VILLAGE, San Francisco, California
November	MARINE ROOM, EDGEWATER BEACH HOTEL, Chicago, Illinois

1955

January	SAXONY HOTEL, Miami Beach, Florida
February	ROOSEVELT HOTEL, New Orleans
March	CHASE HOTEL, St. Louis, Missouri FOOD SHOW, St. Paul, Minnesota

Personal Management
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Direction: MUSIC CORPORATION OF AMERICA

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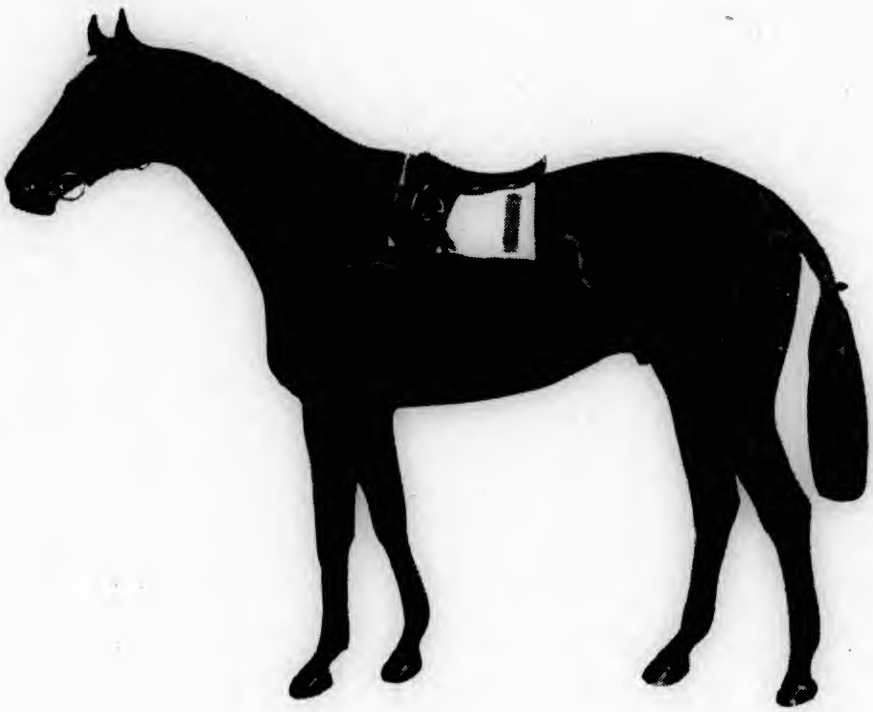

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The Seven Ashtons
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New York, N. Y.

My dear Friends:

After over two years we regret that your long and successful engagement at the Latin Quarter must come to a close.

Not because we, or our audiences have tired of your act but simply because in show business it is an axiom that one must change acts occasionally.

And although we know that we will never have a better or more spectacular act - we must conclude that two years is as long as we can possibly keep any act no matter how wonderful.

So we wish you God-speed, we hate to see you go.

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Season's Greetings

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Currently — LATIN QUARTER, Miami

Just Concluded Chase Hotel, St. Louis

Porte of St. Jean, Quebec

Cassini TV

Accompanied by Fred Stamer

HELEN BOICE

Just Concluded

Four Months' Engagemen at

CHASE HOTEL, St. Louis

Thanks to Harold Koplar

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January 18

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Paris Syndicates' Cafe Control

Continued from page 247

a pleasant risque show at the Naturistes and plenty of undraped chassis along the Rue Pigalle.

Champs-Elyees has lost the lush Drap D'or whose sporadic reopenings have not been able to make it click. A real top name is needed for the next try. Carrousell has its new female impersonation show "New Faces" and manages to make this drag affair palatable through standout costuming and uncanny female types. Novelty payoff has them all in boy's clothing at the end. Next door is the Bouef Sur Le Toit which has become a windup spot and presents mostly U.S. sepia piano work. Mars Club goes on being a usual windup spot as the Calavados and Charlie Beal's Ascot Club. A rash of stripperies have sprung up along this main stem in the Crazy Horse Saloon, The Piano Club and The Grisbi Club. They get a fair share of the nite play.

Le Carroll's has wisely turned to name rather than man-dame appeal and headlining the bombastic Philipe Clay and the solid impression act of Gerard Sety has brought this back an appreciative clientele. Villa D'Este also uses big names who can double in other spots for good draw. L'Amiral has its zany revue which has become a standby here and the Club Des Auteurs is one of the languishing spots trying to make a haven for new cleffer-singers. So far it has not caught on. Club De Mecenes is located in the downstairs room of the late eatery The St. James Club, and is primarily a spot for the Gallic bourgeois class who make this a sort of private club with door prizes and surprise acts a feature. Further along the outskirts of this district is the Puerta Del Sol welcoming those in a Flamenco mood and Maurice & Carrere has opened an intime boite on the first floor of Maxim's. This has only background piano and is a late eatery spot for the who's who here.

Cour Et. Jardin is still the counterpart of the Maxim's club in Palais Royal, and others like cabaret eatery Chez Gilles and Francis Claude's Milord D'Arsouille give this section some allure.

Sur le Left Bank

Left Bank has its St.-Germain staples such as The Rose Rouge and Fontaine Des Quatres Saisons. Rose Rouge has been vacillating in popularity of late but the return of the sing-mime quartet, the Freres Jacques, has filled this spot again. However, future is uncertain. Smaller clubs like the Club St. Germain Des Pres, L'Echelle Jacob, the Abbaye, with U.S. folksingers Gordon Heath and Lee Payant, are still popular here. Small jazz boites are also popping up in this vicinity such as the Metro Jazz, Riverside, Bidule and a host of Discotechs which play jazz records and can accommodate the jazz happy youngsters by charging small tabs. Other standards here are the belly dance places, the folksong spots, contained in medieval caves, and the small bars serving up cheap drinks and flamenco guitars.

Montparnasse has a trump in Chez Gaby. This and participation spot helps the clientele shed all inhibition as Gaby smoothly and skillfully gets the games into progress. Without any annoyance a good time is had, and he presses into service his hatcheck girl, Michele Scott, with a pair of Piafy pipes, and the rest of his workers for ribtickling effects. Many nudie spots fill out this district and it has its share of boosters and regulars. Not many new type or offbeater clubs have sprung up this year.

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The Truth About the 'Rope Trick'

By MILBOURNE CHRISTOPHER

More nonsense has been written about the Hindu Rope Trick than any other feat in magic's 5,000-year history. Scarcely a year goes by but what the most controversial mystery of all time gets more publicity in the world's press. A retired British army officer writes a letter to the Times recalling a performance seen long ago in a remote Indian province or the London Magic Circle offers a considerable sum for a single open-air demonstration. Photographs of the trick appear frequently in the picture magazines. Double exposures and paste-ups, not magic, produce the illusion.

Those who claim to have seen the rope trick in the open are never magicians, nor are they able to offer evidence documenting their statements. Many magicians have capitalized on the notoriety of the trick by offering stage versions. Servals Leroy, Goldin, Thurston, Blackstone, Devant and Dante are only a few of the wizards who have featured it.

It will come as a surprise to most readers that China, not India, was the scene of the first recorded story about the trick and no rope was used.

The legend started in Ibn Batuta's 1355 manuscripts, which told of his curious adventures while traveling. In Hangchau, China, Batuta while a guest of the Amir, was entertained by his chief hocus-pocuser.

The magician tossed a wooden ball, to which several leather thongs were attached, skywards. The ball went out of sight. The wizard commanded one of his assistants to climb up a leather thong after the ball. When the boy was out of sight, the magician called for him to return. There was no answer from above. A second and third command to return were ignored. The magician grasped a knife and went up the thong himself. Soon severed hands, legs, arms, a torso and a head fell to the ground. Then the magician slid back down into view, his clothes thick with blood.

He kissed the earth in front of the Amir, spoke several magic words, then heaped together the dismembered pieces of his assistant's anatomy, and gave them a kick. Instantly the boy jumped up fully restored.

The Batuta wrote that when he saw this he was so astonished he had an attack of palpitations. A few sips of cordial straightened him out. His table companion, a Mohammedan judge, was less affected. He calmly gave his opinion that it was simply hocus-pocus, or juggling.

The Emperor Jehangir of New Delhi described another version of the "rope trick," which took place at his court some time between 1605 and 1627. Again no rope was used. A member of a Bengalese troupe threw one end of a 50 cubit length of chain in the air, where it remained standing erect. A dog ran up the chain and vanished, then a hog, panther, lion and tiger followed. All were swallowed up in space. At the end of the trick, the performers took down the chain, coiled it up in a bag and bowed off leaving their spectators completely nonplussed.

The German Road Company

An even more fascinating twist on the "rope trick" was reported in Magdeburg, Germany, in 1550 according to the accounts of Johann Weir. A magician wound up his performance by saying he could make so little money among men that he would go to heaven. He hurled a cord upwards. His pony ascended it. The magician followed holding the pony's tail. His wife tagged after the trickster and her maid accompanied her. At this point in Weir's tale a curious passerby joins the wide-eyed spectators and asks why they are looking skyward. He quickly is informed about the vanishing magician and his companions, whereupon the newcomer blandly assures the crowd it has been deceived for he has just seen the wizard down the road going into a tavern.

Any one of the three "rope tricks" described above would be an absolute sensation today. Perhaps some modern wizard will find Aladdin's lamp or an obedient genie. Without the lamp or genie, I'm sure the tricks as described will never be done.

There are two other legendary Oriental tricks which you won't be seeing in your local theatre. Marco Polo, the 13th century traveler, tells of one. When Kublai Khan was thirsty during state dinners he would give a signal and cups, filled automatically from containers some distance away, would be whisked through thin air to his outstretched hands.

Ibn Batuta, who started the "rope trick," legend recorded another dazzler. During a visit with the Sultan in Delhi he saw a man assume the shape of a cube and rise in the air over his head. When he saw this, Batuta tells us, he was so flabbergasted that he fell over in a dead faint. When he was revived, he looked up. The cube was still hovering in space. Another performer took a sandal and rapped it against the ground. It rose until it reached the floating cube, then it struck out with a kick. The cube descended at once to the ground and Ibn Batuta had his customary palpitations of astonishment.

Getting back to the "rope trick," a few years ago a Canadian magician announced he would present the feat during a stage performance with all the classic trimmings. His rope rose on schedule, his assistant climbed the rope and he climbed after his assistant. Soon the stage was littered with pieces of anatomy, which dropped from above. The magician slid back down the rope, wiped the blade of his sword and gathered the pieces of his helper's body in a wicker basket. Hocus pocus, the boy jumped out intact. But instead of gasping with amazement, the audience howled with laughter. The magician was puzzled until he saw an extra arm, which he had forgotten to toss into the basket, on the side of the stage.

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To All
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WILBUR CLARK'S
DESERT INN
LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

Two Yanks Abroad

Continued from page 247

great fight champions, Freddy Welsh and Owen Moran, whom we had met in America, saw to it that their friends were made welcome. Charming theatre manager too—when it came to pay-day, he accompanied that business with a ritual of a round of drinks in his office.

But we did not get to Ireland till 1914. We had been brought up with the Irish kids on the East Side of New York and "The Wearing of the Green" had come to be the theme song of the Avon Comedy Four. We now had the feeling that we had come back home again. The relaxed feeling of the Irish who sat in the boxes of the Empire, in Dublin, smoking their pipes was pleasing to the Avons, and their quick-on-the-trigger humor was good for the boys as we paced our act to a fast tempo.

'Ireland Must Be Heaven . . .'

While the English were known for their loyalty to favorite performers, the Irish were not found wanting in that virtue. There was a gallery customer who heckled a monologist with whom he was displeased. "And whad did you come here for!", he kept interrupting. This remark offended the good taste of a customer who was sitting in the front row of the orchestra. He stood up, faced the gallery and shouted back, "To teach a jackass like you his manners!" Then he turned around and motioned to the actor on stage, "Go on with your monolog."

Pacing slow for the English, fast for the Scotch and the Irish, and happily in between for the Welsh, we had learned that people laugh at the same things, some sooner, some later. Our experiences with these audiences would come in handy in developing in us a sense of pace adjustment to different audiences and of organizing our material for effective laugh response—timing. We then sensed what Maurice Zolotow ("No People Like Show People") was later to give as an excellent definition of that technique—"knowing when to speak a line, how quickly to speak it, when to cut it short, when to wait for a laugh, when to speed up the tempo of delivery, basically to feel the audience's mood and reactions." Or as Jack Benny says, "Not so much knowing when to speak, but when to pause."

First All-American Bill

Our crowning achievement was reached when we received a wire in Dublin from the Foster agency to come to London to participate in a novel idea. The Finsbury Park Empire was going to inaugurate something never seen in England before and the Avons were asked to top the first "All-American Bill." This is how the Red White and Blue poster read that Monday, July 13, 1914:

THE AVON COMEDY FOUR, in their new School Teacher Skit.

THE SIX BROWN BROS., minstrels from Primrose and Dockstader shows, with Mr. Tom Brown.

THE FOUR BARDS, gymnasts.

FRANCIS DOOLEY assisted by Corinne Sales in a comedy act, "That's Silly."

THE STANLEYS in silhouette, "Fun in Shadowland."

ETHEL MAE BARKER, violoniste.

CHARLES & FANNY VAN, in a novel skit, "A Case of Emergency."

JOSIE HEATHER, dainty comedienne.

Stage Director: NED WAYBURN.

Musical Directors: LOUIS A. HIRSCH & MELVILLE GORDON.

The handbill adorned with the stars and stripes is today an item of quaint memorabilia. As on all Moss & Stoll handbills, the announcement bore the legend, "'Tis not in mortals to command success, but we'll do more—deserve it"—Addison. There were to be two shows nightly at 6:40 and 9:10. The prices were $1.20 for box seats to 12c in the pit and 6c for an upholstered seat in the gallery.

In the audience to welcome the cast were some old friends from home, Al Jolson, George Jessel, Will Rogers, Eddie Cantor and Jack Norworth. When the Avons came on, an unusual sight greeted us—the entire audience was chewing gum to give it the 'American touch'. We later discovered that it was Will Rogers' idea; when he heard about the All American bill he went out and bought 1,000 sticks of gum which the ushers passed out to the audience. The idea caught on and the management retained it. We offered to give Will a credit line in the program—Chewing Gum by Will Rogers. For an American song the Avons featured "All Aboard for Dixie".

This innovation in Anglo-American goodwill was later copied in New York when an All-English bill at the Palace included Bransby Williams, Ada Reeve, Albert Whelan, Bert Errol, Ethel Hock, Norvo & Knox, Casey & Warren, Rebla, The 12 Jackson Girls, and An Amateur Night in London.

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Droves Of Dialog—or So You Wanna Be A Playwright!

By EUGENE BURR

Sometimes it seems that everyone with a fourth-grade education and access to a typewriter decides eventually to become a playwright. Annually, harrassed clerks of the copyright bureau are required to issue birth certificates attesting the legitimacy of several thousand dialogic brain-children—and those that are copyrighted are only a tiny drop in the vast swill-bucket of those that are actually written. The origin of this yen to spoil good paper with bad dialog remains shrouded in mystery, but as an all-American urge it rates second only to the desire to display oneself in public for the delectation of the peasants—a form of acute exhibitionism known to its victims as "wanting to act."

Eugene Burr

The urge toward play-making, one supposes, is the more understandable of the two. For the young Duse or Marilyn Monroe (and even her male counterpart) must have a firm belief in the possession of at least a modicum of personal beauty, no matter how repulsively baseless such a belief may be; but the incipient playwright can bear a strong family resemblance to Jo-Jo, the dogfaced boy, and still follow his chosen career (as a glance at the portraits of some of our leading dramatists will distressingly show). For another thing, an acting career depends on finding someone else—producer, director or agent—who agrees with the candidate's estimate of himself; while the playwright can indulge his craft in the isolation of his own padded cell. His plays may never be bought, he may never even show them to anyone (a practice indulged by an unfortunately small number of young dramatists), but that still doesn't prevent him from emitting scripts and considering himself a playwright.

The chief reason for the bumper crop of eager dialog-benders, however, is probably the complete lack of knowledge of their chosen field possessed by most of them. Anyone, the acolytes figure, can write a play; all you have to do is borrow an idea from someone, and then put a lot of words around it in the funny form that a playscript requires.

Murderously Competitive

They fail to realize that the playwright who tries to break into the ranks of Broadway dramaturgists has one of the toughest jobs known to man. He is, in the first place, entering the most murderously competitive area in the realm of authorship; he is pitting his neophytic knowledge of stagecraft against the experience of master craftsmen in a highly technical field; he is gambling not only on his own ability, but on the ability of playreaders and managers to recognize whatever talent he may possess; he is taking a long chance that, even if his play is good, it will pass unscathed through the well-meaning endeavors of a director and a parcel of actors each of whom is determined that his own efforts will highlight the entire production; and, finally, he is trusting his brainchild to the perspicacity—or lack of it—of those Olympians known as critics, upon whose captious findings the fate of his play, these days, depends.

It's a tough lot; and the neophyte who starts out with no knowledge of it, and suddenly finds it knocking a few of his teeth in, is given to wailing about it with a depth of self-sorrow unmatched since the last act of "Camille." His plaints are habitually echoed by sympathetic commentators; and the resultant public lachrymosity makes the dramatist seem one of the saddest figures in the annals of the stage. But the fact remains that he has chosen his lot of his own free will. He can always go back to ribbon-clerking or taxi-driving or garbage-collecting when the going gets too tough.

The first problem confronting the newcomer is to decide just what type of work he will do; and sometimes getting the answer to this seemingly simple question can drive the incipient playwright to the door of the madhouse. One young dramatist told me recently that after a producer had dropped the option of a play of his—a serious play on an important theme—his agent pleaded with him to write something more "commercial." So he did. He wrote three "commercial" scripts in succession, and his agent actually sold one of them. He sold it to three producers, one after another; but none of them produced it. Undeterred, the agent asked for more of same. But one producer, sensing the quality of the author's work, asked him for another serious play—so he did that. After a year, the producer still hasn't decided whether he wants to buy it.

Another approach is that used by the Bright Young Men of the post-Saroyan school. Their theory is simple enough: startle the faddists into attention, and then give them something so muddled and obscure that they're bound to think it magnificently profound. This is a theory particularly attractive to the inept newcomer, because the less you know about your medium and the less effective you make your play the more chance you will have of being hailed as a genius by those who mistake bewilderment for wonder and incompetence for new dramatic form. At least one such was so hailed last season.

Nice Work If You Don't Do It

Once the neophyte has solved the problem of what sort of play he's going to write, a second problem assaults him: how is he going to eat until his first script is sold? The easiest way is to acquire a father with a million dollars and a foolish fondness for his son; and the next best thing is to get your wife a job.

The tyro who takes over the task of hawking his own master-works should remember that even though he's the greatest genius to come flaring into the firmament since Shakespeare retired to Stratford, and the sheaf of dialog in his hand really will make a million dollars for anyone smart enough to produce it, the other fellow doesn't know that — at least not until he's read the play. And if he doesn't like the script, the tyro should remember that not all brains are as great as his, and that not everybody knows as much about the theatre as he managed to learn in English 14B. He can pity the fellow—but at least he should handle things so that he's not thrown out when he brings in his next play.

Next comes the problem of rewriting. Each so-called expert will have his own ideas. The innocent acolyte, taking his script to two successful producers, is likely to be confused when Mr. A tells him it's a fine script but needs more comedy, and the last act should be completely rewritten, while Mr. B tells him he has a wonderful last act, but the rest of the play may as well be thrown out of the window. His confusion is hardly modified when he takes the script to two more producers and discovers that their opinions not only disagree with those of Messrs. A and B but also with each other. Only one thing do all these wise and respected gentlemen have in common; they all think that he should rewrite his play. How is the playwright to decide which rewrite is best — or, indeed, whether he should do any rewriting at all? It's a question that can be answered only by each individual for each individual case.

Problems number 5 to 498 will come up in production if, after 15 or 20 years, the neophyte is lucky enough to sell a play. They include: What to do as the producer changes his opinion each time he shows the script to another relative, friend or elevator boy in his apartment building. How to prevent a potentially good script from being rewritten right out of the window. Okaying a director — granting the producer can snare a director in the first place. Rewriting for the director. Rewriting to suit the talent — or lack of it — of the cast. Rewriting after the first performance on the road. Rewriting.

Playwrights may not rate the millions of hot tears that have been shed over them; but they do have a rough road to travel, and the fact that they've chosen the road themselves doesn't make it any easier in transit. Perhaps, if more budding playwrights knew anything at all about the field they were so blithely entering there would be fewer budding playwrights. Which—as you may agree if you've ever gone through any large number of unsollcited scripts — might not be a bad thing at all.

N.Y. Legit League Should Be Nat'l

By JAMES F. REILLY
(Executive Director)

The League of New York Theatres needs to be more specific. The name in itself is a slight misnomer. In addition to representing all the legitimate theatres in New York City, up to the recent withdrawals of the Shubert theatres, the League also represents substantially all the play producers of the United States as well as eight theatres in other cities. A campaign is now on to enlist additional theatres outside of New York either through the League directly or its collateral organization, the National Association of the Legitimate Theatre. These theatres are not now organizationally represented in the U.S.

The basic reasons for belonging to a trade organization are these. In the first place an united front is neeessary. In collective bargaining with unions much more strength is presented by an organization than can be engendered by an individual theatre operator or producer. I do not imply that it is practicable for a national organization to do this with every small group, many of which have to be treated on local levels.

The reasoning that all should be represented is this. The results of negotiations by organizations or a majority of single entities, whether they be favorable or less unfavorable, are usually binding on non-members or other individuals. In that case the latter have had no voice in the deliberations and the formulation of settlements. Their complaints about or resentment to what has been settled upon are therefore unavailing. If something favorable, or at least less onerous, has been obtained they are like bar habitues who are the recipients of drinks bought by someone who buys drinks for the "house" and are getting a free ride.

Taxation, for Example

Other things than collective agreements occupy the League's activities. It was solely responsible for the inclusion of the legitimate theatre in the reduction of the admissions tax from 20% to 10% recently. This was done by the employment of a legal representative in Washington at considerable expense in fees and disbursements. Without such efforts it is quite possible that only the motion picture theatres might have been granted such a reduction as was evidenced by the unanimous passage of the Mason Bill, vetoed, however, by President Eisenhower. This accomplishment redounded to the benefit of every legitimate theatre in the U.S.

The League is constantly on the alert to guard against oppressive legislation such as censorship, new taxation, or the imposition of unnecessary manpower (aside from union demands) as has been threatened by city and state agencies.

Another concrete achievement by the League, in addition to the admissions tax reduction, is the development of a nationwide subscription campaign in 20-odd cities in the United States. From dues contributed by League members over $89,000 has been spent by the League for public relations campaigns for the Legitimate Theatre and the subscription campaigns which have been jointly supported by and operated with the Theatre Guild-American Theatre Society. The majority of theatres serviced in the various cities have also contributed.

In short, I hope I have given some valid reasons why everyone should be on the team.

Outdoor Dramas, Usually With Some Historical Theme, Now Big Show Biz

By THEODORE PRATT

An entirely new legit theatre field appears to be developing on what ultimately may be a national scale. This is outdoor dramas depicting some historical aspect of various states done summers at specially built amphitheatres. One has already become big annual business, a few fair-size. The professional potential could be much larger.

Ted Pratt

The first of these, of course, was Paul Green's famous "The Lost Colony," done at remote Manteo, North Carolina, now in its 14th season. The leading outdoor drama, however, is Kermit Hunter's "Unto These Hills," done at the Mountainside Theatre on the Qualla Indian Reservation at Cherokee, N. C. This had its biggest take last summer, its fourth season, with approximately 150,000 attendance in about two months.

At an average $2 admittance this means a $300,000 gate. Concessions account for more and a Cherokee Museum and Cherokee Village with around 75,000 admissions at $1, bring the gross of all enterprises to a quite respectable figure for a short season.

Harry Davis, director of "Hills," is the man productionally responsible for the success of this one, with Carol White, formerly in the picture exhibitor field with Wilby-Kincey, as general manager, and John Parris, previously with AP and UP, handling promotion.

Davis is assistant to Samuel Selden, director of the Department of Dramatic Arts at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The Carolina Playmakers there, under the late Frederick Koch, started the outdoor drama trend. Selden, inheriting Koch's spot, developed it and is now the doyen of the art. He oversees many of the successful ones, in particular "The Lost Colony" and "Horn in the West" at Boone, N. C.

Selden and his cohorts have developed special techniques for staging outdoor dramas that make them a far cry from the corny old pageant idea of the past. They aren't satisfied with the status quo, but continually work on the plays, bettering them and improving the design and construction of new amphitheatres.

The second most successful al fresco drama is Paul Green's "The Common Glory," now part of the Rockefeller Revolutionary times exhibit at Williamsburg, Va. Last summer, in its eighth season, it clocked a 75,000 attendance, half that of "Hills." The next one is "The Lost Colony," with 45,000. Following that is "Horn in the West," about in the same category with 42,000. None of these is of payoff calibre. "Glory" may break in the black, but the others do no more than keep their heads above water.

North Carolina and Florida

"Horn," directed by Kai Jurgensen, also of the University of N. C. staff, is the maverick of the dramas, boldly experimenting every season, and the first to do without a narrator and the usual organ music. The other dramas rank below the above, done at smaller amphitheatres. The state of North Carolina estimates that its dramas so far have brought nearly 500,000 extra tourists who have spent around $6,000,000, with nearly $200,000 in taxes going to the state coffers. One community, that of Cherokee, has had its business increase 40% on account of its play.

Winter operation on outdoor lines began two years ago in Lake Wales, Florida, with the Black Hills Passion play moving down for the season from North Dakota. Both seasons were successful in this 3,000-seat amphitheatre, with the second one being solidly so. John Caldwell, author of "Florida Aflame," presented his play in the 1953 summer at the Lake Wales theatre, but it failed. It will open for a winter season in January at Clearwater at an amphitheatre built by Pinnelas County. In the Florida winter field the author of this article has written "Seminole," dramatized from his novel of the same name, with play published by the University of Florida Press. This will be presented at Ft. Lauderdale on the east coast in January of 1956. Rex Williams, formerly with United Artists, Loew's and the Sister Kenny Foundation, will business manage "Seminole."

A new summer operation will be "Wilderness Road," by Paul Green, at Berea College, Kentucky, in the Indian Fort Theatre now being built. Sam Selden will direct. Kermit Hunter is working on two new ones, to be staged in Tulsa, and at San Antonio, the latter to depict the story of the Alamo.

Two Notable Flops

There have been two notable failures in outdoor drama production. One was "Forever This Land," by Hunter, a Lincoln play done two years ago at Petersburg, Ill. Script and productionwise it was deemed one of the best, but didn't last for a second season.

The second failure was "Thunderland," by Hubert Hayes, a Daniel Boone drama done two years ago at Asheville, N. C. This was regarded as a natural but did not prove so, with many reasons given for its limping through two seasons, among them being a lack of sufficient financing and far too great production haste. The amphitheatre was built and production made in six weeks.

John Gassner has pointed out that outdoor dramas, so far, mostly have been in the hands of semi-professionals, college dramatic people, or downright amateurs. Gassner notes the possibilities for the pro in all departments of the field, which seem very real. Most states have two or three dramatic historical events and locations for plays.

It is, however, a tricky business producing an outdoor drama, easily on a par in size with a Broadway musical both in scope and financing. The script must have great local historical emotional impact and contain broad pageantry, good dances, vivid costuming, and well integrated music with, if possible, several big production scenes offering battle or other effects.

The amphitheatre must be built in a quiet but easily accessible area that has a large annual tourist turnover. Costs must be kept down while at the same time offering a colorful and dramatic attraction. With these ingredients it has been found that the American tourist is hungry to see an evening production of an outdoor play about the section in which he is touring. And American tourism is growing every summer all over the country and every winter in the south and southwest.

First year costs, including a 2,500-seat amphitheatre, production, and promotion, run about $250,000. Once established, with a potential take of $300,000, annual opening expenses of $15,000, and total operating expenses of around $65,000 for a 10-weeks season, a success can mean a perpetual gravy train if performances are kept up to scratch. University of North Carolina puts out a booklet, "Producing America's Outdoor Dramas," explaining how it can be done. At the same time the outdoor experts there caution people about rushing into the game without long and careful preparation. Most of the successful dramas have been many years getting to their first nights. And the fact remains that "Unto These Hills," is the only bigtime paying proposition so far. Located deep in the mountains at a conjunction of tourist routes with no evening entertainment competition whatsoever, it cannot be taken as an example that would happen other places.

Still, it is felt that if it can be done in one place it can be repeated in others, especially if a wholly professional presentation is offered. It is possible that the American national theatre, often talked about, could be found in professionally operated outdoor drama if every state had one or more.

Tennessee Williams Vs. Odessa Prohosnoyenko (The Chicken Or The Egg?)

By LOUIS LASCO

(The following extract was taken from a yellowed edition of Pravda, the first Soviet claim of priority in the province of the theatre.)

MOSCOW . . . Recently, the American dramatist, Tennessee Williams, saw a production of "his" play, "A Streetcar Named Desire," proving once again that American producers are not overly concerned with originality. It is only a coincidence that the production of this play occurred shortly after the Bolshoi presentation of Odessa Prohosnoyenko's masterpiece, "An Elevator Named Pegasus?"

Note the kindergarten bluntness of William's title and then regard "An Elevator Named Pegasus." What magnificent symbolism! What consummate irony! The title states the premise—man's unalterable destiny to wallow in the slop and quicksand of his selfishness, greed, vanity and carnality, now and then soaring fretfully, like a crippled condor in a vain attempt to burst his bonds, but only to descend in an elevator named Pegasus.

The play is framed in a single, four-level set, a Moscow apartment on Pieskov St. The heroine is Caprice Ayasnova, a faded jonquil of some 45 summers and as many turbulent winters. Once the proud, hard-riding daughter of an immensely wealthy kulak, she has these past 10 years been reduced by the Revolution to purveying her charms for a few kopecks.

She plies her trade in a barren forlorn cubicle on the fourth floor of the Nitchevo Apts. She lives in the past, pouring over her album and mementoes, nurturing her despair.

Unbeknownst to her, Itchka, her younger sister, who boasts a fine moustache and a recently successful operation for acne, has married Ivan Popov, a heavily-muscled Stakhanovite fabricator in an airplane factory, and has moved into an apartment on the first floor of the same house.

The curtain opens on Caprice's room. The door is ajar. We see her sitting lethargically on the edge of her bed, a dressing gown hanging loosely and revealingly from her drooping shoulders. (The soft almost inaudible strains of the waltz from "Eugén Onegin" (are heard in the background.)

Mischka, a gnomish sort of chap, knocks timidly and enters. He falls at her feet and embraces her ankles.

Mischka—I can't bear to be apart from you, Caprice, my dove. Let me take you away from all this!

Caprice—*(Bitterly)* All this? Where would you take me, Mischka? So far away I would never remember all this?

Mischka—for the time being, my room, two doors down the hall. But next month I will be transferred to Stalingrad.

Caprice—And if you fail to get the transfer?

Mischka—I will not fail! They must transfer me! *(2 NKVD men pop out of chinks in the plaster.)*

1st NKVD—Must transfer you, eh? Imposing your will on the People's Republic, you, you!

2d NKVD—Trotzkyite! *(They both spit.)*

Mischka—Gentlemen, I meant—noble gentlemen—believe me—

1st NKVD: *(Taking notes)* The accused heaped abuse on us, calling us decadent members of the bourgeoisie. *(They handcuff him.)*

Mischka: *(As he is being dragged away)* Wait for me, Caprice! We still have the future!

Caprice: *(Popping a piece halvah into her mouth)* Future? My past is my future. *(Opens her album and belches gently.)*

CURTAIN

Only a short scene but crammed with the rich basic ingredients of the theatre—love, despair, hate, hope, action, devotion, philosophy, vituperation, tension, suspense, anxiety, resolve, cruelty, compassion, ambition, fear, bravado, irony, etc. Let us go on.

The Politburo, alarmed by the failure of the workers to increase production, issues an edict forbidding dating, in order to conserve energy. Consequently, Caprice finds herself suddenly out of business and unable to pay rent, packs her few things in a shabby valise and takes the elevator downstairs. And we realize that the slow squeaking groaning descent of the elevator eloquently symbolizes and foreshadows the tragic destiny of this lost and bewildered creature, like the subdued anguished whine of a distant train whistle at midnight. Quo vadis?

Caprice meets Itchka on the first floor and, after a happy reunion, moves in. Itchka, eager to retain her privacy, invites to the house Sergei Estenko, a minor official in the counter-sabotage ministry, in the cherished hope Caprice will inflame his somnolent marital desires. Now we find Caprice and Sergei alone at the table.

C—I am at once puzzled and grateful that you have no wife, Sergei.

S—*(Mouthing a salami)* My mother lives with me.

C—*(Blanching)* How nice. And yet it must be lonely for you, poor dear.

S—*(Spitting out a stone)* It's quiet! *(Pounding first on table)* A man must have his quiet so he can think.

C—And what good is a wife if she cannot spare her husband the intrusions that beset him?

S—*(Kicks off his boots)* My mother sits in front of the door all day.

C—Such devotion! I know I should love her? *(Choking slightly)* But alas! One does not live forever.

S—The doctor says she has at least 25 years ahead of her.

C—Sergei, do you feel that the room is a bit warm?

S—I feel all right. How about a game of checkers?

C—I feel faint. Forgive me. *(She slips out of her dress)* So confining.

S—Have you no underclothes?

C—They're such a bother. *(Runs her hands through her hair slowly).*

S—Are you sure you wouldn't like a game of checkers?

C—Do you like me the way I am, Sergei?

S—I am not one to decieve myself. The moment I set eyes on you I said to myself—now there's a girl I'd like to do things for, maybe bring her candy, anchovies, silk stockings, even soap. There, that's what I said to myself.

C—Sergei, you're proposing to me.

S—I suppose you could call it a proposition.

C—No, I meant a proposal, marriage.

S—Visionary!

C—Don't you love me? Want me?

S—Of course.

C—Then marry me.

S—I can't.

C—What's to stop you, my hero?

S—I know about you. Who you are.

C—But Sergei, that's the past.

S—Is not your future the past by your own admission?

C—You—you were one of the NKVD men?

S—Right with Stalinsharp! Want to go for four doubles?

C—Get out! OUT! You pig! Hypocrite!

S—I go. But remember, I will never again ask to play checkers with you.

(Stalks out.) *(Caprice sinks to the floor in a tearful heap. Ivan enters, clad in a new set of flowered burlap pajamas, smelling briskly of toilet water.)*

Ivan: *(Standing over her)* *(Caprice looks up fearfully)* You'll feel better on the couch. That's what a couch is for—to feel better.

Caprice: Ivan, what can you be thinking?

Ivan: About what I am feeling.

Caprice: What of Itchka? You must think of her.

Ivan: We'll discuss that sensibly—afterwards.

Caprice: Born to the couch—lived by the couch—and now *(Draws forth a dagger)* I shall die by the couch!

Ivan: Not yet, Caprice!

Caprice: *(Stabs herself fatally.)*

(The stage is blacked out for fire seconds and then in a crimson haze we see Caprice crumpled in the elevator as it ascends, a muted choir of angels intoning a requiem against the counterpoint of the "Sailor's Dance" played by a balalaika ensemble.)

CURTAIN

German Language Group Bows in N. Y. With 'Play'

A new German legit group has been formed in New York, tagged Deutsches Theatre Inc. It opened last Sunday (26) with a German-language production of "The Play's the Thing" at the Hunter College Playhouse. Concert booker Felix G. Gerstman is producer of the non-profit venture, in which Sig Arno, Kitty Mattern and Peter Capell will appear.

Last German-language outfit in New York was Players from Abroad, with which Gerstman was also associated.

KABUKI TO EDINBURGH

Edinburgh.

The Kavuki Dancers and Musicians from Tokyo are set to play the Empire Theatre here next Sept. 5-10 during third week of the 1955 International Festival.

It will be the first time that the arts of the East have been presented at the Edinburgh festival. Company visited the U. S. last summer.

GREETINGS

Katharine CORNELL and Guthrie McCLINTIC

YOUR PLOTLESS PLAYS

By PETER SAUNDERS

London.

There doesn't seem to be much difference in producing plays in America from doing it in England. Costs are up but the potential take is proportionately higher.

But there does seem to be a great difference in what the theatre going public wants.

I saw 12 plays on Broadway. Leaving out "Teahouse," which is a deserved smash hit in London already, there were only two that I judge to have near-certain chances of success in England. "Caine Mutiny," a fine play, beautifully acted, directed and produced, and "Tea and Sympathy," which has been banned by our Lord Chamberlain. Why he banned it I don't know. A more tastefully written play on a distasteful subject I have never seen.

Now that doesn't mean that the other Broadway shows would fail in England. ("Dear Charles" and "Quadrille" have, of course, already been winners over here.) But the trend of American taste *does* seem to be on the sex life of the human male in conjunction, by a happy coincidence, with the human female.

(Note: Peter Saunders is one of London's fast vanishing independent producers. With four hits in the West End—two are London's longest running plays—he has just spent seven weeks in America as co-producer with Gilbert Miller of Agatha Christie's "Witness for the Prosecution.")

Plays like "The Seven Year Itch" and "The Moon Is Blue" both ran for a time over here. But I doubt if they showed a profit. I saw three or four plays of the same genre during my American visit. I enjoyed them all. But I doubt that they would be popular here.

Mood and Dialog

The plotless play seems to be the American fashion, and the public seem quite happy to have slick and amusing dialog which frequently leads nowhere.

I don't count musicals. The success of American musicals in England has been proved and proved. And proved. And it will be proved again.

A welcome sign of progress in America is the virtual disappearance of the "box set." If playwrights have a one-set play in one room, the designer seems to work to make it 'unusual.' Nothing is duller than to look at one room—and an uninterstring one at that—all the evening. I give full marks to the American designer for being "different."

Uncomfortable Seats

I noted with regret that in most theatres the seats were too narrow, and the arms (unpadded in most cases) were too high for comfort. Also, the line of sight in most American theatres is not good. There are too many side seats where the customer only sees a small part of the stage.

But what a delight to have free programs. In England a four-page program is seven cents, and it tells you the cast and the scenes and that's about all. It isn't just the cash. It's the irritation of delving for money, having no change, and then getting none of the biographical information given in American programs.

One Nuisance Less

And what joy to have no smoking in the theatre. It reduces coughing to the minimum and any actor who has appeared on the London stage will tell you what it means NOT to have someone lighting a cigaret (or, indeed, a pipe) at the vital moment in the drama.

I have a quiet regret at the absence of bars. Liquor sometimes makes for better enjoyment, and the inveterate drinker will always go over the road for refreshment if he wants one.

I saw every show I wanted to by the simple process of going to the boxoffice, or by going to a "scalper" and paying the modest dollar booking fee. I was never overcharged, and I found no evidence of stories current in England that for smash shows $50 a seat was being charged.

Courteous Boxoffice

I found great courtesy in boxoffices, and noted on more than one occasion great tact being used with rather difficult customers.

It always amuses and amazes us how the figures for shows and the profit and/or loss are published so regularly. It couldn't happen over here except in isolated instances. Whether it is a good thing or not I should not like to say. But certainly it makes interesting reading.

It seems that most American productions have a large number of angels from all walks of life. This is good for the theatre. It gives a large number of people a very real and personal interest in the theatre.

One final request. Do *please* remove air raid instructions from your programs. Surely war can be forgotten just for two or three hours?

Public Domain A Naughty Word

By PHIL DUNNING

Charles B. Dillingham was strolling along Fifth Avenue one day when he happened to notice Arthur Richman, the dramatist, getting on a bus.

"How is your new play coming along?" Dillingham called to him.

"Fine, thanks; I finished the second act last night," yelled the bus driver.

It seems that everyone you meet has written a play at some time or other, but evidently all the plays that are written aren't copyrighted. There are only about 3,500 dramatic compositions and dramatico-musical compositions copyrighted in the U. S. annually. The Copyright Office defines the term "dramatic composition" as the acting versions of plays for the stage, motion pictures, radio or television ,and similar works dramatic in character. The term "dramatico-musical composition" includes opera, operettas, musical comedies, and similar productions.

It would be a pretty safe guess that there are over 20,000 scripts written in this country each year that are never copyrighted.

Some Good Ideas

Many plays of the past, even if they weren't successful at the time they were produced, had good ideas as well as colorful characters and still have sufficient merit to warrant working over for today's market.

Under the provisions of the act of Congress approved July 8, 1870, the registration of works in which copyright was claimed was transferred to the Library of Congress. The first registration under this act for a dramatic work was made on July 21, 1870. From that date until June 1, 1954, there were approximately 243,247 dramatic works registered by the Copyright Office. While this adds up to nearly a quarter of a million registrations, it also includes all the renewals.

If an author considered his brainchild worthy enough to be copyrighted when he created it, then it is well worth having the copyright renewed.

With tv using up ideas at such a terrific rate, there is bound to be a shortage of available material before long.

The law prescribes that application for registration of renewal copyright must be made during the last year of the original 28-year term, measured from the exact date on which the original copyright began. In other words, the application and fee should not be submitted until after the end of the 27th year of the first term and they must be received in the Copyright Office before the end of the 28th year. If no application and fee are received, or if they are received after the original term has expired, the work falls into the public domain, and the copyright cannot then be revived.

You better have a peek into your trunk. Remember, the play you save from falling into the public domain may be your own.

Woodville Lives Again

By CHARLES WILLIAMS

Elmer Sampson looked like Gary Cooper, talked like Jimmy Stewart, and was built like John Wayne. He had no talent but was a contented stagehand which in itself is a novelty.

At the moment he was busily assembling electrical equipment for a new revue called "Lights and Shadows," which had been auditioning talent for several days at the Adelphi Theatre just off Times Square. Elmer had sadly neglected his work, as he watched the female star of the show rehearse one of her songs.

Dolly Devine had everything—physically and histrionically—and she sang like an angel. Her casual good mornings to Elmer left him in a sort of trance. Elmer's reverie was rudely interrupted late in the afternoon of the third day by an announcement that the backers of "Lights and Shadows" had suddenly decided to back out. This threw an immediate pall over the entire company, especially Elmer, who realized that he wouldn't be seeing Dolly Devine after today.

The stage manager was busily taking names and addresses of the cast in case fresh money came in. Then a second bombshell hit—but this time Elmer himself was the target. A ferretlike young man had wormed his way through the group and suddenly thrust an ominous-looking legal document into Elmer's hand, and then disappeared. Elmer was puzzled by the contents. Dolly Devine came to his rescue. She touched him on the arm and remarked, "Can I help you? I used to work in a lawyer's office."

Speechless, he handed her the paper.

In a moment she looked up. "You are a very lucky young man. It says here you're rich. You're to go to the Federal Building at 40 Bowling Green and receive a large sum of money and sign a contract with the Government allowing them to work a mine on your farm in Woodville, Michigan."

Mechanically he replied, "Woodville is my home town . . . I own an abandoned farm near the outskirts, where I was born." Dimly he heard Dolly reply.

"It seems your farm is loaded with uranium deposits."

"But I don't *want* to go back to Woodville—not for a million dollars. I *love* the show business." Tongue-in-cheek Dolly quipped, "you're rich enough to bring the show business to Woodville. Look at the spot *we're* in. Over a hundred people out of work in the middle of summer and no prospects—and YOU'RE beefing about going back to Michigan to pick up a couple of million dollars. I'd go to the South Pole for a small part of that."

"Would you go to Woodville?"

"In a minute—that is if you'd take the company, too. We could break the show in there then come back and open in New York." Dolly's eyes widened when Elmer quietly said, "It's a deal. You make the announcement, Miss Devine."

A howl of derision went up from the company when Dolly told them Elmer was the new backer. Elmer stepped forward, waving his legal document, and told them to be in Grand Central tomorrow evening with their families and luggage and he would guarantee everyone five weeks' salary.

* * *

The troupe was in high spirits as the train pulled into Chicago. They changed to a branch line heading further north. It was a very rough ride. The surrounding country was mostly logged and burnt over forest land. The engineer nearly missed the small station at Woodville which was overgrown with weeds and brush.

The New York actors were astounded at the desolate scene. No cabs, no station agent, no activity or life at all. A half a block down the main street they found a small empty hotel, THE COMMERCIAL.

In a lobby full of cobwebs and dirt a meeting was held.

The director, press agent and Elmer discussed what they could do in this deserted town for five weeks. It was a challenge. Elmer, in a moment of inspiration, suggested that they bring the town back to life. The director immediately began to CAST the town from members of the troupe. A hotel manager, policeman, detectives, newspaper editor, judge, banker, storekeepers, etc., were selected. Elmer was unanimously cast as mayor.

* * *

The transformation of Woodville was spectacular. Elmer spent money lavishly. The town was completely renovated, cleaned and transformed into an ultra-modern community. Not a trace remained of the once-deserted Woodville. Elmer sent a substantial check for an ad in the theatrical section of the N.Y. Evening News.

* * *

Billy Hanley, dramatic critic of the N.Y. Evening News, was intrigued by the size of Elmer's check and the format of the ad, which read:

DOLLY DEVINE
in
WOODVILLE LIVES AGAIN
By Elmer Sampson
Opening Aug. 27th with a
Great Cast.

He decided to catch the opening personally. Twenty-four hours later Hanley reached Woodville. He found the station deserted. Angrily he started walking down the lonely main street. He turned in at the Commercial Hotel but found nobody on duty at the front desk.

A crudely printed card propped up against the counter read: "Gone to the Courthouse."

Hanley took the hint.

The Court House was SRO and Hanley was forced to stand. Hanley was astounded when he recognized E. T. Davis, attorney-general for the state of Michigan, who was conducting the prosecution.

He was even more surprised when he saw the well-known New York ingenue, Dolly Devine, take the stand. Davis proceeded to cross-examine her and Hanley gradually realized that someone in the room named Elmer Sampson, a stagehand from the Adelphi Theatre in New York, was facing a serious charge.

Dolly Devine unfolded the fantastic tale of Elmer Sampson's bequest and subsequent spending of his money on actors and the refurbishing of Woodville. This was followed by countercharges filed by distant relatives claiming partownership in the farm and its uranium deposits.

Hanley realized that Elmer's only chance of winning rested in his actually proving his name was Sampson and that he was born in Woodville.

The old courthouse, along with many other early buildings, had been destroyed by a tornado, and after the surrounging country had been logged-over, Woodville became a deserted village.

* * *

On the third day of the trial Sampson introduced new evidence, namely an old battered metal box found in a pile of trash where his former home had stood. The box was forced and the contents revealed Sampson's family bible and photographs of the family, including pictures of Elmer as a youth. This was convincing proof that Elmer Sampson was the legitimate heir to the farm and its deposits.

Davis, the attorney-general, received a barrage of hoots and jeers as he left the courtroom. He had never realized at any time during the course of the trial that everyone connected with the town was an actor playing a part and had learned their law terms from a script.

The courtroom emptied quickly as Hanley watched, fascinated. Elmer was showered with congratulations, then, suddenly, he found himself alone, looking at Dolly. He was unable to speak but Dolly, being an expert in lovescenes, went into his arms and kissed him meaningly. Hanley slipped out of the courtroom unnoticed by the two lovers. He was convinced he had just witnessed the most unusual show of his entire career. He walked to the hotel for his bag then started back to the railroad station.

The little town now presented a bustling, lively, happy scene. All the people (actors in the courtroom) had begun living their parts again as citizens of Woodville.

Hanley boarded the train filled with a mixture of emotions. As the station faded rapidly in the distance, he sighed and started to write his review:

"WOODVILLE LIVES AGAIN"

Different Times, Different Customs —It's Inevitable!

By BERNARD SIMON

Broadway doesn't fully know it yet. But the legit theatre in America has at last begun to make some of the changes demanded by changed conditions of our time.

Bernard Simon

Take touring shows. Before the railroads built their network, every large town had its own local theatre and touring meant the travelling of a guest-star with a script in his baggage. When the railroads and the population and wealth of the country grew, (and before films, radio, tv and night-time sports became serious competition) it was widely and extremely profitable to send out whole productions, with full casts, down to walkons, and a baggage-car or so containing everything down to the most trivial prop or sheet of spotlight gelatin.

But now many railroads have limited-power diesels and light trains, incapable of taking along an occasional extra baggagecar. They've torn up tracks to some towns. Their limited schedules just about prohibit fast jumps. And costs have skyrocketed to a point where professional touring, as in good old President Taft's day, is impossible except for smash-hit attractions visiting the larger keycities.

Trouping the small towns has not ceased, however. It's merely taking another form. The theatre has come full circle. Once more guest-stars are going out with scripts. It's been found that an actor with a script can travel almost as cheaply as a can of film. And complete productions are gypsying along the highways instead of on the railroads.

Broadway knows about the bus-truck foray this season via "Oklahoma!" and a few other shows in previous years, like the Hurok production of "Fledermaus." It also knows a little about the expeditions of the Barter Theatre through the south. But it doesn't know about dozens of other touring operations that are very much keeping live theatre alive in small communities—outfits like the one Mason Bliss runs from Richmond, Va., or the Amulet Productions run by Jerry Blackwell from Oswego, N.Y., or the dates played by troupes from Michigan State College and other colleges.

Because I run a thing called Package Publicity Service, which supplies publicity materials like ad-mats, posters and ready-to-use newspaper releases to all kinds of theatres, professional and non-professional, all over the American continent, and in a few overseas spots as well, I know that there is much more living theatre than most Broadway people are aware of. Around 3,400 organizations are producing plays on a regular basis over the American continent.

Professional Amateurs—Very!

Most of these groups are amateurs. An important point, however, is that the gap between amateur and professional productions is growing narrower. The directors of these groups are often professional, being well-trained graduates of thorough theatre courses in great universities. Their sets and lighting are often as fine as anything to be seen on Broadway. They are building up acting talent of a surprising calibre. And they are increasingly inviting professional actors as guest-stars from the Broadway stage, from Hollywood, or from nearer radio and television centres.

Multiply these 3,400 college, university, community, industrial-employee and military play-producing groups by an average of five productions a year, and you have 17,000 productions a year, each presented for an average of three performances, or over 50,000 performances a year. What's Broadway, with about 7,500 performances a year, to that?

Some of the theatres used by university and community groups have stages and auditoriums so much more modern and convenient than anything on Broadway that Main Stem houses seem indeed barns by comparisons.

Many productions of these 3,400 groups are of plays that Broadway has tested—they are hit-conscious, too. But they also put on Broadway failures. An enormously-popular play among these groups for several years has been John Patrick's "The Curious Savage," which closed after three weeks in New York. And they also put on numerous classics that Broadway finds prohibitively risky—not only by Shakespeare, Moliere or Euripides, but great plays of recent vintage by Shaw, Chekhov, Strindberg, O'Casey, Galsworthy. The whole theatre heritage that's on the library shelves is theirs to use, and they use it.

They also try new plays more than most people realize. We all know about the new-play policy of Margo Jones' Dallas theatre, but other theatres are often putting on "world premieres." The first whirl of what later became a Broadway success, "Time Out for Ginger," was in a Houston theatre.

The theatre is dying, though—the theatre of President Taft's day. This was a theatre that operated in the hub of a city, with companies "direct for New York," and with a standard schedule of eight performances a week—six in the evenings at 8:30 or so, and matinees on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Dated As 23 Skidoo!

New patterns of life are making such a theatre as outmoded as watch-fobs. Department stores began to meet these new patterns several years ago. They kept open at night when it was found that the kind of housewife, with one or more servants who could go to mid-week matinees and go shopping in the daytime, was being supplanted to an important degree by women who held jobs or had no servants if they stayed home. The stores set up suburban branches in shopping centres surrounded by acres of parking-space when they recognized the centrifugal forces driving large populations to live on the rims of cities.

Theatres too are going to keep step with these new patterns soon, by rearranging the time-and-place factors of performances. They must. As for the timing factor: already a touring production of "The Moon Is Blue" has this season found it worth while to forego mid-week matinees and to give instead two shows on a weekend night, to get in a full eight a week.

Early Curtains

Despite the failure a couple of years ago on Broadway of the seven o'clock curtain-schedule, tried out too briefly and under the most unfavorable conditions, a long-overdue tinkering with existing outmoded curtain-times, is bound to become general. London has found early curtains successful, and so will we.

The present 8:30 or 8:40 curtain, which became customary in the days when everybody went home to a 6 o'clock dinner, before going out for an evening's entertainment, makes no sense now to either dwellers in suburbs or in centre-of-town apartments. Sooner or later the 8:30 or 8:40 curtain will be changed to fit the present pattern of 7 p.m. (or later) dinnertime for in-town dwellers and out-of-town visitors, and the commuter's need for an early show that he can come to direct from his job (with time for merely a snack) and that will get him home early.

And the parking problem will be met. It has to be.

Playwrights also, I believe, are going to recognize the existence of the 3,400 theatres beyond Broadway. Those who happen not to be able to obtain a Broadway production—for such reasons unconnected with the merit of their scripts as inability to get sufficient backing, unavailability of essential stars, or some other problem peculiar to Broadway—will begin to think about leasing their works for presentation in these other theatres without waiting for a New York run.

The regional theatres, however, are not suckers for what Broadway has rejected for script reasons. A play has to be at least as good, probably a bit better, than the Broadway hits offered by the play-leasing services, to get attention in the smaller communities, where the theatre-going taste and discrimination are as high as anywhere else. They've been seeing Broadway's best for years, and have high standards.

Actors willing to guest-star outside New York, playwrights willing to have productions made outside the UBO houses, are beginning to discover that there's gold in those purlieus. Some of these theatres pay $200 to $300 or more a night to guest-stars. And the royalties from a hundred productions or so a year in the community and college theatres can come to a tidy sum to a playwright whose play otherwise might only be gathering dust in his agent's file—not only without jeopardizing the chances for its eventual Broadway production, but even enhancing them.

With film production costs also risen, cinema price-scales have to be almost as high as a live theatrical production. It is conceivable that the drama of our country in the near future will be in two main divisions—the kind that's free and can be seen in house-slippers, i.e., television—and the kind that has an admission price and requires its audience to dress up and go out to see it live, i.e., legit. The movies, with their high costs for entertainment resembling free television, might get slightly lost in the middle.

They already are, a little. Note the fact that in Milwaukee a movie house that couldn't make the grade has now been converted into a professional legit theatre, the City Circle Theatre, due to get under way Jan. 25, after raising its funds from thousands of citizens in the same hoopla manner as a charity fund-drive. Circle indeed—full circle! Remember when so many legit houses were being turned into homes for films! Now the switch is on. And don't overlook the force of Philadelphia's Playhouse-in-the-Park as an example that other municipal governments are sure to follow in sponsoring their own theatres.

The kind of theatre that will thrive in '55 and in later years, may not be the Broadway-type of theatre, but it will be theatre—alive, too, not closed-circuit tv, which is interesting but is still tv, not theatre.

In "Midsummer Night's Dream" Puck said he knew a bank where the wild thyme grows. I know 3,440 producing groups where the theatre grows.

3 FROM SHOW BIZ PUT 64G IN 75G 'FESTIVAL'

Practically the full $75,000 capitalization for Walter Fried's upcoming production of "Festival" was supplied by three backers, all show biz figures. Total investment of the trio is $64,000, split between legit director Felix Brentano, legit producer-scripter Charles Lederer and the latter's aunt, former film actress Marion Davies.

Brentano has a $39,000 stake in the production, while Lederer and Miss Davies are represented by Harold Ornstein, with a $25,000 contribution. Miss Davies, incidentally, has a $180,000 slice of Lederer's hit production of "Kismet," currently in its 54th week at the Ziegfeld Theatre, N. Y.

Other backers of the Sam and Bella Spewack comedy include CBS-TV researcher Oscar Katz, $1,500; author-playwright Arthur Kober, $1,500; attorney Lloyd Almirall, representing actor-producer Maurice Evans, $1,000; Thomas Scherman, conductor of the Little Symphony Orch, $750; Robert Rieman, book sales exec, $750; Albert Leventhal, Simon & Schuster veepee, $750; and Irwin D. Wolf, president of the Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera, $750. There is no provision for overcall.

Production, with Paul Henried starring and Albert Marre directing, is currently in rehearsal for a scheduled Broadway opening Jan. 12 after a tryout tour.

Coast Legit Continues On The Wane Despite Big-Coin Facelift In '54

By MIKE KAPLAN

Los Angeles.

Despite the most expensive facelifting job in history, Coast legit remains a creaking, debilitated onetime grand dame with a steadily shrinking circle of friends. And this year, the mourner's chorus of predictions that her demise can't be far off, sounds more frighteningly possible than ever before.

The recent Yule season underscored the depth to which legit on the Coast has fallen; save for the usual scattering of intimate (150-seat) houses and a nitery type revue at the 400-seat Ivar, Los Angeles was without professional legit entertainment during the holiday period. Nor was this merely an unusual, unfortunate circumstance. The Biltmore Theatre, local UBO outlet and supposedly one of the last major strongholds west of the Mississippi, was dark for all but two weeks of the final five months of the year.

The gross tally for the 1954 year dipped to just under the $2,000,000 mark, emphasizing again the growing indifference of the Coast population to what the downtown papers still refer to as "the spoken drama." Los Angeles has continued to grow in the last year; admittedly its population rise has slowed to some extent, but it hasn't stopped. And for the sixth consecutive year, interest in legit has waned in almost a direct inverse ratio to the population gain.

Legit oldtimers, who have been wearily explaining the phenomena for the last few years, no longer even bother to discuss the situation. Los Angeles is shrugged off as a "bad legit town," and the big money which Huntington Hartford has poured into his new theatre in Hollywood is shrugged off as a noble experiment that won't even have the run that Prohibition enjoyed.

The Hartford, under Richard Skinner, has ambitious plans for productions which will originate here and then go east. This was the pattern of the opener, "What Every Woman Knows," starring Helen Hayes, and "Sailor's Delight" also opened here with the intention of going to Broadway. The theory is excellent; if it can be maintained in practice, legit might get a new shot in the arm on the Coast.

The discouraging truth, however, is that for more than five years the oldtimers have fingerpointed one ray of hope and attempted to pin their optimism on it. The upcoming season seems to be no different.

What has been said before can be said again: legit on the Coast is in the hands of amateurs and promoters. The problem is, can it still be rescued?

Maybe Some of That R&H Gloss Will Rub Off On 'Em

Houston.

R & H Enterprises, which has only the remotest connection with Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein 2d, plans to present musicals here and at Beaumont. New firm has been formed by local ad agency men Ted Rogen and Mike Haiken to book touring musicals into the two towns.

R & H Enterprises had contracted to bring the bus-and-truck edition of "Oklahoma" into the Music Hall here and a theatre in Beaumont in late January, but the closing of the show's tour this week in Milwaukee ends that long-distance connection with Rodgers-Hammerstein.

However, Rogen & Haiken hope to book future R & H musicals under their R & H banner.

'Finian' to Launch New Small-Seater in H'wood

Hollywood.

"Finian's Rainbow" will be the first presentation of the new Hollywood Repertoire Theatre group founded by Dan O'Herlihy and Charles Davis. Latter appeared in the musical on Broadway.

The partners have set a Dec. 31 debut for their new theatre, latest in a series of Hollywood small-seaters. They have taken a two-year lease on the former Slapsy Maxie nitery.

2d 'Pajama' Co. Has 40G Advance for Mont'l, Feb. 7

Montreal.

With an advance of more than $40,000 already in the till, the second company of "Pajama Game" should break all house records at Her Majesty's, where it opens Feb. 7. Interest has been lively since first ads were run three weeks ago, despite a $5.80 top and the fact that no cast was listed until last weekend.

Fran Warren will costar with Stephen Douglas and Buster West, and the cast will include Patricia Stanley, Marguerite Shaw, Fred Fox, Mary Statton, Bobby Vail, Fox, Mary Statton, Bobby Vail, Shirley Stoller and Barrie Croft. Lack of potent b.o. names indicates that the show's Broadway rep is selling the tickets.

In the meantime, Blackstone is slated for one week starting Jan. 10, and Mavor Moore's all-Canadian musicomedy, "Sunshine Town," based on Stephen Leacock's stories "Sunshine Sketches," is due in the week of Jan. 24.

'Boy' in Black By 12th Week

"The Boy Friend," the Cy Feuer-Ernest H. Martin production of Sandy Wilson's satirical London musical comedy, is now in the black. As of last week, the show had recouped its $118,258 production cost and returned $50,000 of its $140,000 investment. The show is earning about $10,600 weekly profit.

According to the latest accounting, covering the four-week period ended Nov. 27, the show had earned back $89,761, leaving a balance of $28,497 still to be recouped. That was more than recovered in the ensuing three weeks, ended last Saturday (18). An initial return of $50,000 capital was made last week.

The gross for the four-week period ended Nov. 27 was capacity, plus the standee limit, for an approximate gross of $153,200, and an operating profit of $42,802. The show is currently in its 13th week at the Royale, N. Y. The original production is now in its 13th month at Wyndham's Theatre, London.

Florence Bates Memorial

San Antonio.

A Florence Bates Scholarship has been established at the Pasadena Playhouse College of Theatre Arts, according to Gilmore Brown, founder and prez of the school. He stopped here briefly last week enroute from New York to California.

The scholarship is in memory of the local actress who died last January.

Cheers

DONALD COOK

"Champagne Complex"

'The Road' And Its Pleasures

By RALPH T. KETTERING

Chicago.

The theatre is a heartbreaking business at best but its rewards are numerous and encouraging. Take "the road" as an example. Old friends, whom you may not have seen for many years, pop up to greet you and warm the cockles of your heart.

R. T. Kettering

As I write these words I have covered, since last June 14, more than 11,000 miles mostly by air in behalf of Paul Gregory and his astounding hit, "The Caine Mutiny Court Martial." Last year I visited 69 cities in 42 states. So far this year I have visited 41 cities and the season is yet young. Maybe it is the gypsy in me but I like it. I know of no other business that welcomes you with a warm embrace at the age of 65.

I have managed to stir competition in the hearts of Mary Floto, in Wichita, and Mrs. Hallett Johnson, in El Paso, as to which can turn out the best chicken dinner, hot biscuits, honey and mashed potatoes. Of course with an appetite for myself. In New Orleans, last winter, I was making a broadcast at Brennan's Vieux Carre Restaurant with Jill Jackson when a diner stopped me.

"Did you ever write plays?" he asked.

I admitted the sad truth. Then he explained.

"I am promotion manager for the Malson Blanche Department Store but I used to be an actor with the Ginivan Bros. Rep Show under canvas and I played every

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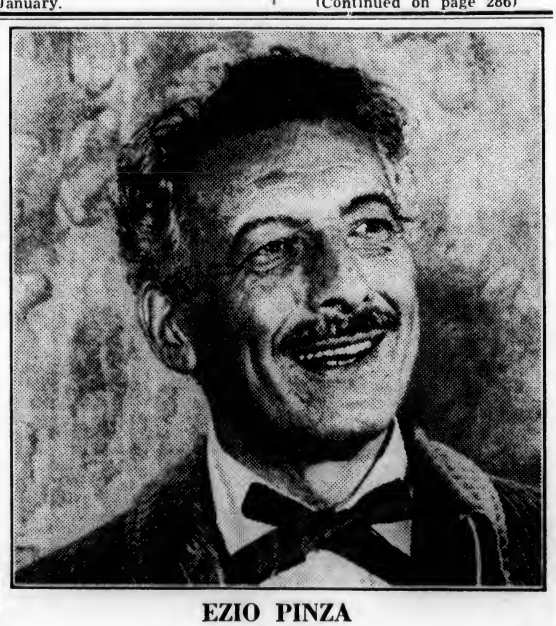

EZIO PINZA

Opera's Golden Age Is Always Now

By FRANCIS ROBINSON

(Met Opera Asst. Mgr. & Press Head)

When the editor asked for this piece he suggested two possible subjects: (1) "Will the Golden Days of Grand Opera Ever Return Again?" and (2) "The Problems of Publicizing So Well Publicized an Institution as the Met."

The latter can be disposed of in a couple of paragraphs. Rarely will you ever get a pressagent to admit there is any problem which more space wouldn't solve, but I was never one who subscribed to the doctrine that any publicity is good publicity.

John Rosenfield, hearty critic of the Dallas Morning News and a great newspaperman, once said: "The Metropolitan has been preeminent for so many years, its virtues are no longer news to anybody. Iconoclasm makes the more interesting reading. Consequently, you hear more criticism of the Metropolitan than praise."

It is pretty discouraging when Helen Traubel's desertion of Valhalla for Las Vegas has reaped as much notice as the engagement by the Metropolitan of Marian Anderson; but in the six months I have been director of publicity at the Opera House (in addition to my other duties), there has been a great deal to be thankful for and few complaints.

I turn, then, to the first subject. I happen to be one of those who believes the Golden Age is not over, that each generation produces its own Golden Age singers.

To begin with, no one has ever satisfactorily defined the Golden Age to me in point of time. John McCormack said it was the epoch when Handel was writing his wonderful stuff, and yet it is inconceivable to many of us there was ever a greater Handel singer than McCormack himself.

Critic Irving Kolodin has fixed the Golden Age at the Metropolitan as the period from the late '80s, when Lilli Lehmann arrived on the scene, to about 1907-08, when Sembrich and Eames as well as the De Reszkes and Plancon had departed. Kolodin is not old enough to have heard any of them. Just so, until my friend enlightened me, I had imagined in my innocence that the Golden Age also included Caruso and Farrar and Galli-Curci. Caruso, mind you, had been here only five years—and certainly not come into his own—by 1908, the year for which Kolodin has ordered the tombstone.

To Kolodin's credit, he does cite an example of his own kind of pre-dating, a critic of the '90s—the middle of the Golden Age, if we accept the above dates—who conceded that for the elderly of his time the Golden Age was the era of Mario. According to Bulwer-Lytton, Mario had it in him to "soothe with a tenor note the souls in purgatory." Mario died in Rome the year the Metropolitan Opera House was opened, so apparently there have been several Golden Ages. Does it all depend on when you came along?

It has been exactly 100 years since the Academy of Music which stood at 14th St. and Irving Place in N.Y., had its first season of opera (with the aforementioned Mario and Grisi), and we know that in 1854 there were those who shook their heads dolefully and moaned that opera in this country would never be what it was at the Park Theatre with the Garcias 30 years before.

The splendid Academy performances won new devotees who were just as adamant in their refusal to admit the merit of any newcomer. In 1883, when a greater house—the Metropolitan—threw open its doors, they buried opera again with the same epitaph, "It won't be what it was in the good old days."

When Diaghileff revived "Scheherazade," somebody asked if he were going to use the original Bakst scenery and costumes.

"Yes," he answered, "but with brighter colors."

The inquirer wanted to know why.

"Because," Diaghileff replied, "that is the way people remember them."

It is the same with voices. But as long as we have a Milanov, a de los Angeles, a Tucker—and a dozen others I could name—you will never get me to say the Golden Age at the Metropolitan ended with Flagstad or Pinza or Ponselle, however much I hated to see them go.

Outdoor Paris Show

By BERNARD SOBEL

Paris is surprisingly naive about outdoor amusements. After all the centuries during which the famous city has been described as sophisticated, this observation may sound silly. Personal experience, however, has convinced me that the real Paris is as juvenile as an American street fair or carnival. And speaking of carnivals—

Bernard Sobel

But I must begin at the beginning. As long as I can remember I've wanted to live a year or two in the French metropolis because my former brief visits never gave me the chance to absorb a satisfying draught of the indigenous enchantment.

Recently, I got my wish and I made all preparations for a perfect existence. That meant, of course, living with Parisians, not tourists. Accordingly, I registered at a small hotel on the Boulevard Montmartre which is so typically French that I rarely saw an American or heard a word of English.

And, oddly enough, I didn't see many of those modish French women whom we identify as fashion perfectionists. Those who did pass by wore ill-fitting slacks, barlequin-like pantaloons, sweaters, often soiled, odd skirts and ugly shoes or sandals. Indications pointed to limited budgets and natural untidiness. But they did concentrate on dyed hair. Almost every French woman, regardless of her age, has dyed hair, not just one synthetic color, but many—white streaks, mahogany, black, red, brown and often pink. The coiffeurs call it "Coup de soleil"—sun-stroke—and the tag is appropriate.

Yet, regardless of their appearance, the French line up on Sundays, 10 and 12 rows deep, staring at the shopwindows, like children at the zoo.

My great surprise, however, came one morning when I noticed a small army of workmen stretching banners, building booths and setting up counters and various displays along the boulevard.

Street Carny

"This looks like an old-fashioned carnival," I said to myself, "the kind that we used to have back in Indiana when I was a boy."

And that's just exactly what it was. Sophisticated Paris has an annual street fair which lasts about a month; that clutters up the streets; makes dopes out of the average citizen; and kills business in the legitimate shops along the highway, for blocks and blocks.

But the sale of confetti is enormous. Grown men and women hurl pounds of it into each other's faces. They also buy false faces and noisemakers. For the children they buy balloons, dolls and candy, made on the street, and frequently unchewable. Extremely popular also are Hopalong Cassady outfits and beautiful Indian headgear, embellished with paper feathers, reaching almost to the ground and worthy of the finest chieftain.

The crowd was both static and surging. Old and young stand, often in the rain, open-eyed, like country-bumpkins, watching all types of old fashioned prize-winning rackets. They flocked into booths to have astrologers reveal their destiny. They consulted palmists to discover their fortunes. But the climax of naivete was ex-

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ON YOUR TOES

By EDDIE DAVIS

In the past few years, ballet has become so popular, that the public has literally taken it to its heart. With such deserved popularity, ballet might well become a part of everyday life. Visualize, if you can, what might possibly take place in a typical business office of tomorrow.

SCENE: BOARD OF DIRECTORS' ROOM.

In center is a long Board of Directors table. About table are nine chairs, four at each side, and one at hand. Room is panelled in rich, English walnut. At back is large, ornate fireplace above which, in what is obviously the place of honor, is a large, full figure painting of Pavlova. At left is massive door. At either side of fireplace are large windows, concealed by expensive, maroon drapes.

AT RISE:

We discover the President of the corporation seated behind table. He wears a wing-collar and cutaway and sports a fat cigar. He speaks into the Inter com.

PRESIDENT

Miss Fontaine, please bring in your notebook.

(Music: "Dance Ballerina Dance")

(Enter Secretary, She wears normal attire above the waist. From the waist down, however, She wears a ballet skirt and tights. She carries pad and pencil and dances in on her toes. Upon arriving in front of the President, she strikes a classical ballet pose. The President begins his dictations. As the President dictates, the Secretary interprets, in ballet, each thought and punctuation mark. The dictation will go as follows:)

PRESIDENT

Dear Sir. COMMA. *(Secretary dances and holds pose indicating a "comma")*

Received your wire . . . PERIOD. *(Secretary dances and holds pose indicating "period")*

It has come to my attention that the Girdle Corset Co. is trying to put the "squeeze" on us. *(Secretary dances indicating putting on a girdle)*

Pardon me. Leave the girdle off. *(Secretary dances indicating taking off girdle. Scratches stomach—sign of relief).*

You are ungrateful! Exclamation Point. *(Secretary does dance and holds pose indicating "Exclamation Point").*

Do you think you can get away with this . . . Question Mark. *(Secretary does dance and holds pose indicating "Question Mark").*

"We'll split" you in two. *(Secretary dances and then does "split").*

When we get through with you we'll have you flat on your—*(Secretary dances and on word "flat," starts sinking to floor in sitting position—She stops for brief, pause and looks at him in bewilderment).*

. . . backs. *(Secretary sighs with relief and gets on her back).*

On second thought, erase that last sentence. *(Secretary moves her fanny back and forth, as though erasing, She stands up and pulls out large splinter from her backside. She holds it up).*

Hmm, what d'ya know—"Lumber in your Rhumba." That will be all, get that off immediately.

SECRETARY

Yes, sir. *(Music: "Dance Ballerina Dance." She dances off).*

PRESIDENT

A lousy speller, but a wonderful dancer. I never thought she could replace Moira Shearer. *(He relights his cigar. A Woman's Voice is heard on the Inter-com).*

VOICE

The Board of Directors have arrived.

PRESIDENT

(On Inter-com) Good. Send them in. *(Music: "Humoresque"). (President rises from seat and moves from behind desk. Below his cutaway, from the waist down, we can see that He wears ballet skirt and tights. He dances to the door and opens it).*

Come in, gentlemen. *(Music: "Spring Song"). (Enter Eight Board Members, dancing on. They are decrepit, old men of various heights and widths. Above the waist, they are dressed, as the President, with ascots and cutaways. Below the waist, they are wearing ballet skirts and tights. All eight immediately go to the ballet exercise bar, attached to the rear wall. With the aid of the bar they go through the various ballet exercises. The President supervises with the aid of his ballet-pointer. An extremely fat man, having obvious difficulties with the exercises, falls flat on his back. Two of the others try to lift him but are unsuccessful. The President lends a hand, gets down low, and places both hands on fat man's derriere and manages to raise him from the floor. However, He falls back down, right on top of the President, who is practically crushed. All Eight rush to the President's assistance and manage to extricate him from beneath the fat man and pull him to his feet).*

PRESIDENT

Abercrombie! Your bar work is abominable! What would Jerome Robbins say?

FAT MAN

Please don't tell him, sir! He'll take away my custom-made ballet skirt.

PRESIDENT

So what! All he can do is send it back to the parachute company: *(The exercise continues. They are doing a squatting exercise. They all face in the same direction. One of the men persists in squatting a split second after the others, so that He actually ends by sitting on the head of the man behind him each time they squat. His skirt goes over the other man's head each time. The President stops the exercise and speaks to the man who is squatting down). Turn around and face him. He needs a change of scenery. (He turns to man who is doing "The Dying Swan" as an exercise).* What do you call that?

MEMBER

The Dying Swan.

PRESIDENT

It looks more like "A Dead Duck." All right, gentlemen. Now a brief salute to our guilding light, the Immortal. *(Line up across the stage, facing portrait of Pavlowa over the fireplace. THEY assume a classical ballet pose with their right hands raised.)*

All hail Pavlowa! Artist Supreme! . . . Interpreter of Dance and . . . Successor to Arthur Murray!! *(Ticker tape starts chattering. President dances over to ticker tape). (Music: "Humoresque.")*

PRESIDENT

Gentlemen, our stock has jumped 10 points! *(Men excitedly flutter over to machine and gather around President to watch ticket). (Music: "Glow Worm"). (They all dance in line, each holding same long strand of ticker tape from which they busily read, bobbing their heads in time to the staccato beat of the music. As the men are happily dancing, the door is suddenly flung open. Two Thugs with guns in hand stand there. They all freeze in various ridiculous positions). (Music: "Peter and the Wolf"). (The Two Thugs dance in. Above the waist, they are dressed in slouch caps, sweat shirts, turned-up collars. Below the waist they are garbed in the underworld equivalent of ballet skirts—and long underwear).*

FIRST THUG

Don't move! Dis is a stickup . . . and de foist one what moves gets plugged . . . so help me, Sadler Wells!

SECOND THUG

Now listen, I want youse guys you should dance to de foist movement of Titchikowsky's "Peter an' de Wolf." Dance by my partner, Louie, the prime ballerina and drop de loot in his bag. Now, come on, get de lead out! *(Music: "Billy the Kid"). (Members dance by second Thug, dropping money into bag. As the President arrives, in front of him . . .).*

PRESIDENT

You fellows remind me of a sequel to "Red Shoes."

FIRST THUG

Yeah! What's dat?.

PRESIDENT

Dirty Sneakers!

FIRST THUG

Whatta you, a wise guy? *(He pushes President against wall, underneath the portrait of Pavlowa. He is about to hit him when he sees the portrait, turns to Second Thug).* Hey! What do you know Pablumova! She does a dance with a dying goose.

SECOND THUG

I don't care if she does a dance plucking a chicken . . . Let's scram before the cops get here. *(Music: "Peter and the Wolf"). (Thugs start to dance off. As They get to door, the First Thug's skirt falls to the floor. He leaves it and exits. Now the Members leap to their feet and expound feverishly. We hear ad lib cries from the members: This is terrible! etc. President on phone, calls excitedly).*

PRESIDENT

Police Department? There's been a robbery in the offices of Batton, Barton & Burpem! The address is— *(Music: "Saber Dance"). (Door opens. Two Cops enter. They wear Police uniform down to the waist and ballet skirts and tights. They dance lightly in).*

FIRST COP

Hang up, we're here!

PRESIDENT

What took you so long?

SECOND COP

We got here *mote alegro!*

PRESIDENT

Fine. We've been held up and you're eating in Italian restaurants. (First Cop picks up ballet skirt).

FIRST COP

What's this?

PRESIDENT

The Ballet Skirt worn by one of the crooks.

SECOND COP

It's a Balanchine ballet skirt.

FIRST COP

Then it belongs to Stinky Nijinsky! He's the only man that wears a Balanchine ballet skirt. Gentlemen, we'll pick them up at once. We know their hideout.

PRESIDENT

Where?

FIRST COP

The Agnes De Mille Ballet School. *(Music: "Saber Dance"). (Cops dance off).*

PRESIDENT

(Watchdog Cops leave). Flatfoots on their toes! *(All members completely morose. Doom appears to have descended upon the office). (Music: Swan Lake).* (Members sway about listlessly, then flutter to floor on their backs, feet in the air for last tremor, then lie prostrate). (Music: "Saber Dance"). *(Door opens, the Two Thugs in handcuffs, followed by Two Cops dance on).*

FIRST COP

Gentlemen, we have caught the crooks!

PRESIDENT

Splendid, so fast?

FIRST COP

We caught them going over a fence to their hideout and the back of their tights got caught on some nail.

PRESIDENT

Oh, that made it easy for you to see their hideout!

SECOND COP

Here's the money. *(Drops bag of money on table).*

MEMBER

See if it's all there! *(President starts to count).*

FIRST COP

Don't bother . . . it's 2 dollars short. We took out for tickets to the Policeman's Ballet Ball. *(Stars shoving the Thugs).* Okay, you guys, take your positions, we're dancing to jail. *(Cops and Thugs dance out on toes with arms arched over their heads). (Music: "Saber Dance").*

PRESIDENT

Gentlemen, cheers! Our money has been returned! This calls for a celebration! *(Members jubilantly line up across stage with President in center). (Musics "Stars and Stripes"). They dance a la Music Hall Rockettes to a rousing finish as:*

Curtain slowly falls

Lunt's Topper

Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne made only one Hollywood film, "The Guardsman." Good, too, but they were not satisfied. Miss Fontanne was the first to see the early rushes on the film. She sped back to the Beverly Hills Hotel, burst into their suite, where her husband was reading, and broke into tears.

"Alfred . . . Alfred," she wailed, "I've seen the rushes—and we're ruined. Ruined! You photograph without lips, and I come out old and haggard and ugly and my tongue is thick and I llsp and fall against the furniture. I look like I don't know my lines, and my feet are big and my clothes hang to me like from a clothes-rack and . . ." But she couldn't go on, so great were her tears. Lunt pondered a moment and then muttered:

No llps, eh?"

Bob Considine.

Tomming on the Old Tent Ground

By HARRY G. SMITH

It was Aristotle (all Greek to me) or maybe Steve Brodie, who first took stock and inventoried the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World; which were, reading from left to right, the Colossus of Rhoads, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Flatiron Building, the Celluloid Collar, the Pittsburgh Stogie and the Uncle Tom Show. And of these assorted marvels, the greatest and most amazing was the Tom show.

Possibly there's no vital call to get excited over or to expatiate upon the departed glories and effects of this utterly native institution; however, it should have more than a passive interest for latter-day theatre students who muse on the longevity of such dramatic opuses as "Able's Irish Rose," "Tobacco Road" and the Flea Circus. And it should have a *soupcon* of nostalgia in it, even at this late date, for many notable though older members of the profession, who, were they scratched, would show some traces of a dormant Tommer under the skin.

Trojan Horse-Play

Starting from scratch a bit over a century ago, this early American epidemic broke out and began its tradition at the Troy (N.Y.) Museum, on Sept. 22, 1852. The go-off was gala in every respect, with precocious Cordelia Howard the original of an uncountable galaxy of Little Evas. The play was prevalent for 100 consecutive nights in Troy before taking the river jump to this end of the Hudson. Here, too, it had a theatrical first—the phenomenal run of 325 performances at Purdy's National theatre on the Bowery (1853). From then on, nourished by the passions that finally led to the Civil War, it began its kaleidoscopic career of national and international triumphs and also grimly endured adversities that would have shunted many a better play into limbo.

Annals have it that the most illustrious presentation of this homespun drama was the one given at the Academy of Music (N.Y.) beginning on March 4, 1901. Wilton Lackaye alternated with William H. Thompson in the title part, and Theodore Roberts, eminent and beloved star of his time, startled his public with one of the most ferocious interpretations of Simon Legree. Burr McIntosh played Phineas Fletcher; Maud Raymond, Topsy; Mabel Amber, Eliza; and Georgia Olp, Eva. This cast made the William A. Brady production one of the memorable classics of the American theatre.

Some of our finest players have interpreted its manifold roles—and some of our worst. Otis Skinner and Fay Bainter topped the cast in a de luxe production in New York, June 6, 1933; and Corse Payton, the "world's best bad actor" by his own billing, had a crack at it in his heyday. David Belasco, as Uncle Tom in the Shiel's Opera House showing ('Frisco, 1874), found it the springboard to his notable managerial career; and Peter Jackson, after lush years of top fistic honors, eked out the economy of his declining years by going Uncle Tom.

Joseph Jefferson came down with it before getting his teeth into Rip Van Winkle. Lotta Crabtree was an 18-year-old Topsy and such burnished names as Stuart Robson, Tully Marshall, J. H. Hackett, George L. Fox and Frank Losee, although vaccinated at a very early age, were not proof against the contagion.

Perhaps the most low-level and disastrous performance was that of the tent troupers who lost their compass-bearings and found they were playing over the "line" in Swamproot, Arkansaw. An irate posse was formed and the tent troupe was tarred and toted out of town on a rail.

Of course, hotheads both below and above the boll-weevil borders, were equally intemperate when slavery was the prime thesis. And "Uncle Tom's Cabin," book and play, was the major fuse that rocked the press, pulpits, political rostrums and barbershops of the nation. Its controversial aspects may have been the reason for the show's immediate and successful impact. But even for many decades after the conflict, the play continued on, audacious and unbowed. There was nothing ephemeral about its popularity.

Standard Equipment

It was the first American play presented at full evening length, theatrical fare previously having been garnished with curtain-raisers and farcical afterpieces. The standard Tom, with its 20 characters, not including dogs, Jubilee singers, plantation singers and dancers, and its six acts, 30 settings and 8 tableaux took three-and-a-half hours to pass a given point; and less time than that to set the sceneshifters distracted. When the Toms gave you the works they gave you a'plenty.

At least once each season they gave thousands of detached people their first and only contact with the glamour and romance of the theatre—providing stiff competition to the combo monopoly of steroptican and magic lantern exhibitions and evangelistic gospel revivals. Often as many as 40 companies toured the provinces annually; where the circuits of opera houses, lyceums and Oddfellows' halls petered out, the pioneering tent show blazed on, bigger, grander and more mammoth than ever, finding new patronage and friends in the more ventilated spaces. Even when the repertories, No. 2 companies and quality name shows flourished in the 10-20-30s, the tented Toms continued to find good boxoffice along the devious routes of their migrations.

Many of the troupes were family affairs with father, mother, offspring and in-laws playing parts year after year. Juvenile Evas matured into Elizas. A well-ripened Tommer was of infinite capacity. He doubled in all parts as well as in brass; if he had any culinary attainments, he (or she) would also double in pots in the cook tent or wagon.

Maybe the final requiem has been chanted over the mortal remains of the immortal Tom show; maybe one should concede that the Tommer, like those other specimens of vanished Americana—the minstrel man, the medicine man and the cigarstore Indian—has gone the way of all flesh. Still, the uneasy hunch presses down that somewhere along the westerly acres of our mighty landscape, under a stone perhaps, there'll be uncovered, please God, a troupe of gaunt, hibernating Tommers, ready to fling their gaudy banners to the breeze—ready to continue with dogged endurance, their accustomed itinerary and destiny. 'Tiess 'em, they always did!

On Tour With Caruso

By EDWARD L. BERNAYS

Today's communications media—television, talking motion pictures, radio, extensive press and magazine coverage—build entertainment personalities. They bring the star's personality, real or synthetic, to everyone's attention. In show business it is assumed this buildup is essential; that no reputation can be made or endure without it.

E. L. Bernays

I know from experience this is not true. Over 30 years ago, in 1917, without radio or television, when motion pictures were silent and press coverage less extensive, Metropolitan Opera tenor Enrico Caruso was one of the greatest boxoffice draws of all time. And now, three decades after his death, his voice and personality continue as living legends.

His popularity and drawing power among all were astounding. This was the more extraordinary because the direct impact of his voice came only to those limited few who attended the Metropolitan Opera House when he sang or had heard his records—and Red Seal records of those days were poor (direct impression was made on wax). And they were expensive.

Though they had never seen or heard him, Caruso was vivid in the minds of milllons. In turn, public imagination and the myth it had created shaped his personality. He lived up to that image of him in song and action.

As a 25% partner and publicity manager of the Metropolitan Musical Bureau, I arranged the bookings and handled publicity for his concerts in Cincinnati, Toledo and Pittsburgh in May, 1917, after the finish of the spring opera season in Atlanta.

A few weeks after our declaration of war with Germany, his presence in these three cities created more downright excitement than the declaration of war on April 19. In action I experienced what it meant to be a legend. Aged 25, my main interest, of course, was to get the job done. Only in retrospect of almost four decades does the assigment have new meanings.

Opera's Beau Brummel

Caruso arrived in Cincinnati from Atlanta on a Monday morning, May 1. An entourage accompanied him—Francis Coppicus, his manager ,and Mrs. Coppicus; Richard Barthelmy, pianist accompanist; Richard Herndon, general manager, and two valets. They were Italian peasants, self-effacing in the background, except when he needed them.

He slowly strutted down the platform of the old, dirty station (since replaced) at 7 a. m. His favorite meerschaum cigaret holder was titled up from the right corner of his mouth. He was puffing away at a cigaret. His cane was in its characteristic place—diagnoally across his back, like a bath towel at work. He was dressed immaculately. He might just be dropping into the Knickerbocker Hotel (corner of 42d St. and Broadway) after the opera. Pearl gray spats set off his highly polished black patent leather shoes. His green fedora was at the usual slight angle.

The next few days became known in Cincinnati as the Caruso days. Wherever he walked or rode, people gathered about him. All wanted to bask, even if only for a moment, in his reflected glory.

Caruso's friendliness was a byword. He liked crowded lobbies, tables, touches of human interest.

Caruso loved to live up to the myths about him. We went shopping in Cincinnati. Striding down the street arm-in-arm with Mrs. Coppicus, we went into Pogues, leading department store. Mrs. Coppicus expressed the wish for a certain perfume for her handkerchief. Caruso wanted to buy her a gallon of it. But he had to content himself with a number of smaller bottles, a gallon all together.

No Sleepless Night

That first evening at the Hotel Gibson he went to bed early. But noise from next door prevented him from sleeping. Checkup revealed a wedding party had been assigned the room next to Caruso's and they were dancing to an orchestra. He called the manager of the hotel and told him about it. The manager let the wedding party know about his call. So potent was Caruso's name that in the midst of the party, and in deference to it, everyone moved nine floors below. Next day Caruso lived up to his legendary thoughtfulness. The newly-married couple, who were spending their honeymoon at the hotel, received a photograph from him autographed, "Thank you for *my* not sleepless night."

Next day, May 2, was a day of rest for the singer. He answered no telephone calls, received no visitors and ate nothing for six hours prior to his performance.

The concert took placé that night. Crowds stormed the hall. A capacity audience, 4,000, headed by Gov. Cox of Ohio, heard his voice. At its close, Governor and audience joined in singing the "Star Spangled Banner," accompanied by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, led by the tenor. Everyone present could say that they had once sung with Caruso.

In Toledo, the next stop, I noted Caruso's ability as a caricaturist and his respect for others' feelings combined in one incident. In the two days' stay there, while dining in the hotel restaurant, he would draw caricatures of those about him between bites. That first evening he caricatured the hatcheck girl. The face with its sharply pointed nose and drooping mouth were unmistakably hers. True, but not flattering. I took the original and showed it to her. "The horrid thing," she said. "I think he is an awful man." When I told Caruso the hatcheck girl was displeased, he walked out to her, humbly apologized, and gave her an autographed picture of himself. He was forgiven. It was characteristically Caruso. He wanted to annoy or injure no one.

Robinson Locke, owner, editor and music drama critic of the Toledo Blade, collected press clippings of famous stars—actors, actresses, singers. When enough clippings on an individual had been gathered to fill a large scrapbook, that individual was classified as a star and the volume was gold-lettered with his name on the cover. Three young women worked full time on filling these scrapbooks. Caruso clippings filled four volumes in this library.

Locke called on me and asked me to have Caruso sign his name in the first book. This scrapbook was filled with clippings of the tenor's first years in America, pages devoted to happenings long since forgotten. One of these was an unfortunate episode in the monkey house of the Central Park Zoo. It revolved around the young tenor's unceremoniously pinching a young woman in the buttocks while they were watching the monkeys playing in their cage. And the young Metropolitan star was arrested and arraigned, to the accompaniment of much lurid newspaper notoriety. I left the book in Caruso's room with a request to his two valets for the signature.

Next morning I found the four books at my door. On the first page Caruso had written in his own bold hand, "When a gentleman subscribes his name to a book it usually means that he subscribes to all the matter contained therein. Were I to do this, in this case, I would be subscribing to a lot of silly nonsense. Being a gentleman, I naturally acceded to a request of an unknown man who asked me to put my signature in this book, and sign myself herewith Enrico Caruso." Incidentally, the Robinson Locke collection is now the solid core of the N. Y. Public Library's Theatre Collection.

In Toledo, no hall was large enough to accommodate the audiences that wanted to hear and see him. I had therefore arranged with the local manager to have the tracks covered over at the railroad terminal, making it into a serviceable concert hall. With no loudspeakers or public address systems in those days, many in the far reaches could probably only see, not hear. But even so, they felt repaid. They had attended a Caruso concert and had seen him in the flesh.

We reached the improvised concert hall at seven that evening, May 3. There was no washbasin in Caruso's dressingroom. It was absolutely essential to have one. He would not have sung without one. He wanted something to gargle into. I went to a hotel. They would not relinquish their washbowl because all their rooms would be rented tonight, said the proprietor. In desperation, I rented a room for the night, tucked the washbowl under my arm and carried it, unwrapped, to the hall. The concert began at the scheduled time.

He sang to 5,500 persons, the largest audience of the tour. He responded to the ovation with nine encores.

Easy On The Star Billings, Boys; You're Just Kidding Yourselves

By NAT DORFMAN

The maudlin sentimentalists of yesteryear used to touch our heartstrings with a lachrymose ballad called, "There's a Broken Heart for Every Light on Broadway." Nowadays, where there are lights, they generally spell out the name of a star. Not that we have so many luminaries floating around the Broadway canyons. But give a producer a marquee sign to play around with, and invariably he cannot resist the temptation to make a star out of a performer who, at best, deserves only featured billing.

This unwise practice of creating false stars is a rather new and unhealthy facet of modern show business, perhaps an offshoot of the films where unseasoned good-looking graduates of gas stations or drive-in luncheonettes rise to stellar heights at the whim of an injudicious, advertising-minded studio head. And while it may lure a few ex'ra popcorn chewers to the film palaces, the reverse is true in the living theatre. There are no popcorn munchers in the Times Sq. show shops, and you can't fool a guy who invests up to $5.75 or $6.90 for a seat.

Stars like the Lunts, Ethel Barrymore, Katharine Cornell, Helen Hayes, Katherine Hepburn, Ethel Merman, Beatrice Lillie, Henry Fonda, Mary Martin, Ezio Pinza, Macdonald Carey, Maurice Evans, Kitty Carlisle and Tallulah Bankhead, are not developed in one or two seasons or even five or 10. A star, in the halycon days of the theatre, meant more than just a name placed atop the title of a play. A star used to be, and still is, an actor or actress who enjoys a definite boxoffice draw by virtue of many brilliant performances over the years. Giving one or two electric portrayals are steps to stardom. But, alas, managers, in many instances eager to have a star, jump the gun and manufacture such luminaries to fill what they believe is a pressing boxoffice need—fooling, of course, nobody.

What makes this a tragic error is the fact many a promising leading man or woman with stellar potentials, if left to mature, dies a-borning. Once they see their names emblazoned over the author's brainchild they begin to imagine they actually are stars, ask stars' salaries and begin to live in a blissful vacuum, rejecting good parts, making preposterous demands and eventually find themselves nursing their pride in the presence of a rapacious agent who can afford to butter their ego as long as their clients can be lulled into the luxury of a dream-world existence.

And speaking of agents, they are as responsible for creating these false stage gods as some of the witless managers. Actors, at best, are vain people. And agents, fully aware of this great weakness, insist on billing clauses that harried managements must often accede to. The distressing result is that quite often a part in a good play isn't as tempting to an up and coming performer as stardom in a third-rate vehicle.

Smart actors will not risk their careers by permitting impresarios or agents to talk them into stellar billing when they are not yet fully prepared to accept the responsibility. Stars are not made by frenzied promotion but by scintillant performance. In the final analysis, therefore, it's the public that determines an actor's place in the stellar galaxy.

All of which brings to mind an illuminating incident involving one of Germany's greatest performers, Rudolf Schildkraut, who was brought over to Broadway for his American debut. One of his aides excitedly rushed backstage during a rehearsal to tell him that his American sponsors were out to kill his chances of success.

"What do you mean?" asked Schildkraut.

"They've got your name last in the billing on the houseboards," screamed the aide. "You're way down at the very bottom this way—'and Rudolf Schildkraut.'"

The veteran actor comforted his aide with a knowing smile.

"Don't worry about where my name is," he said. "When the curtain goes up the audiences will find me."

Legit Is A Gypsy Culture, With Nothing To Show For It But (grand) Memories

By NED ARMSTRONG

The road is prospering this year, and it is pleasant news and brings back memories to a traveler who is stuck at a desk in New York this winter.

Boston in autumn around Fenway Park when the brown and red leaves are sifting into the Charles River and the first overcoats are appearing along Milk St. and the feeling one always has in Boston that down an alley or inside some old building there must be a Pilgrim Father sitting on a high stool at a wall desk . . . a walk through the Boston Common with Elliot Norton to discuss the state of theatre, a subject of persistent interest to him . . . the noonday confab of press agents in Steubens with Mike Kavanaugh holding court and somebody in a hurry to see Elinor Hughes before catching the Merchants Limited.

In Toronto, when it is very cold outside, the always affable and energetic Ernie Rawley explaining some new plan to promote the Royal Alexander, swiveling around in his chair behind what must be the most beautiful road manager's desk from New York to San Francisco . . . the friendliness of the Variety Club in the Prince George Hotel and the same Rawley mesmerizing a chorus girl from "Guys and Dolls," explaining he learned the art from an itinerant magician during the summer lull two years ago.

The very modern, efficient office of Milton Krantz in Cleveland, with several kinds of theatregoer plans working at once in his theatre, and a cerubic smile for the agent with a reported hit . . . visiting with Bill McDermott and the misses out on the cold Lake Shore Drive when inside their home everything is so warm, cozy and relaxed and the story is told again of the time Kit Cornell and the entire company came to Bill's house to give the show because Bill couldn't make the theatre . . . the vitality of Cleveland, and the wonder someone doesn't build a theatre on Shaker Heights.

Those Darn Cutlines

Memories of Pittsburgh around Christmas time and the hard-frozen pavements and slippery hills and perpetual booking talk with Gabe Rubin, whose persistence in keeping the New Nixon running has ranged from outright investment to personal appeal . . . Harold V. Cohen, who always looks so youthful, and is probably VARIETY's oldest inland mugg . . . Kap Monahan, so keen-minded and aware, with a memory that reaches back to Bonfils and the old Denver Days and whose vision about theatrical matters is a lot sharper than many people know . . . the time John McNulty left the Pittsburgh Press as drama critic because, as John explained: "'Twas those darn cutlines. How can a man write a sentence to fit under a picture?"

In St. Louis, not so long ago, when a visit to the American Theatre was almost like coming downtown to take a trip on a river boat—the great embarkment to the edge of the Mississippi was almost visible as you turned into the old theatre, so many buildings had been torn down . . . and Paul Beisman, the businessman of the road, successful at everything he ever touched except finding a solution for dark weeks.

In Washington, in early fall when the northeast is already feeling the grip of winter but Washington is taking its Mason-Dixon time to shift, and is still benevolently warm and beautiful . . . talks with Jay Carmody about so many subjects, for Jay is a man who has lived his professional life completely and enthusiastically and always will . . . the night Jay came by the National to console a prominent playwright whose show he had felt required to pan mercilessly the day before, and spent an hour in the alley discussing possible revisions and came back the next night to revisit the show and went backstage to tell the cast how much better the play was than when he first saw it four days earlier.

Sam Wilson and Bob Boda, the friends of Columbus, who worked together as critic and manager to keep the trail of legitimate plays open into that middle-western city and who know as much about what goes on around Times Sq. theatrewise as anyone east of the Rockies . . . the David Belasco appearance of Boda's office and the sensation of great theatre having gone by that cannot be dispelled when sitting there in the soft late afternoon twilight.

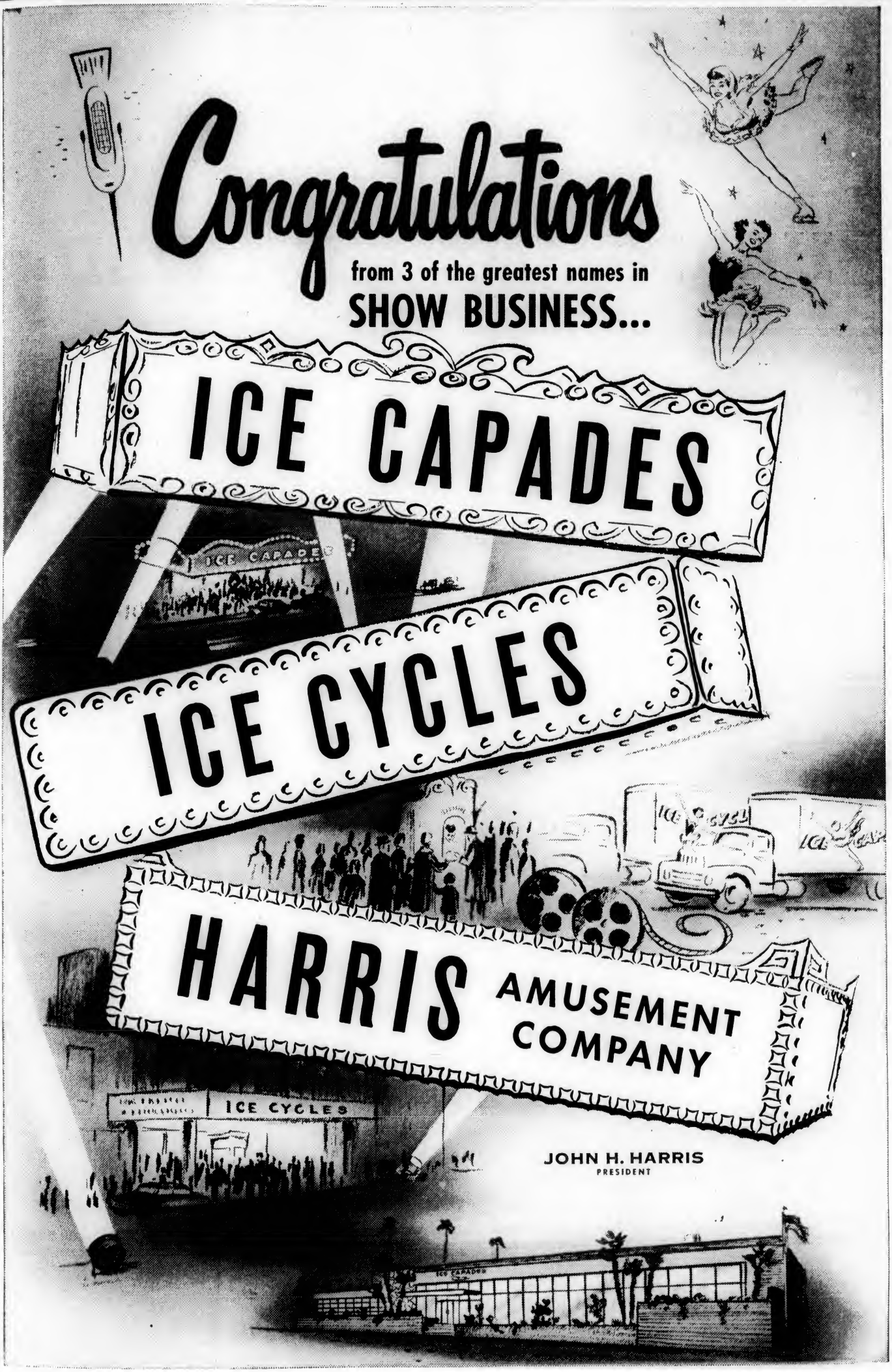
Friendly Railroads

The almost unbelievable fact that a show still must lose a day going from Kansas City to Denver and from Salt Lake City to Los Angeles . . . the wonderful friendliness and cooperation of railroad men throughout the United States, and the daily miracles they do perform, such as combining a baggage car with a mixed train, or pulling a load of scenery by single engine Diesel . . . if the tracks are there, they always get the show there on time . . . the Comet, the Rocket, the Zephyr, trains as exciting as their names.

The strange rivalry of St. Paul and Minneapolis which has resulted in a confusion harmful to both cities . . . the tireless Jimmie Nederlander, and the emptiness of the big Minneapolis Lyceum when the show is bad, the impossibility of getting into the lobby for a hit, even when the Minnesota temperature is 27 degrees below zero outside.

The excitement of driving down highway 91 from Salt Lake City to southern Utah, leaving blizzards behind, to come to the warm, desert air of St. George, and the hot desert lands leading to Las Vegas and San Bernardino, and ultimately Los Angeles beyond . . . the wonder that no one has yet made Las Vegas a show stop for the legit . . . the realization that, in a sense, a traveling show is nearly a parallel for the old covered wagons in time it takes to cross the country and in some ways the comparison is also true insofar as the antique methods still employed to troupe.

The recollection that hundreds of theatre managers, treasurers, critics, editors, radio and television commentators, serve year in and year out on behalf of a gypsy culture, a handful of wandering sequins and songs, and are so grateful when the bigtime hit comes to town, and so defensive when the little turkey is around and in the final sum so in love with the theatre that many have stayed with it years against their better judgments and some are approaching the end of their work years without much to balance for their devotion—except grand memories, like these.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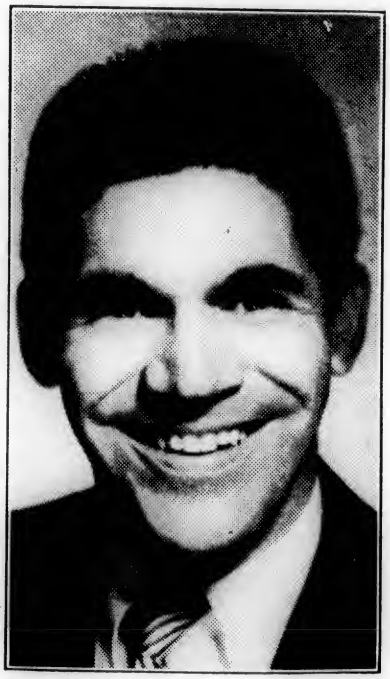

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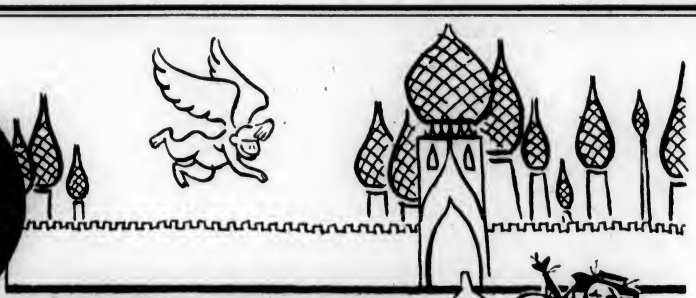

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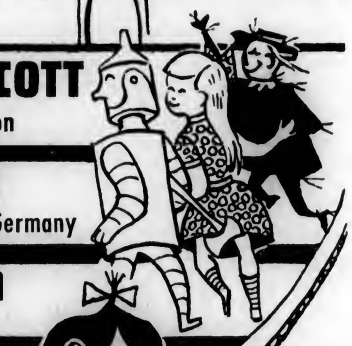

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NORWAY: Osla, Trondheim

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Anniversary Greetings

FRANCHOT TONE

'The Road' and Its Pleasures

Continued from page 272

one of those damned plays you wrote."

Just before he retired as manager of the Iowa Theatre, Cedar Rapids, Andy Talbott found three legit agents in his office. He called for a photographer and had a picture made of Mary Ward, Mary March and myself posing with him. Never before had three legits graced his office in that Iowa town. He burst his vest buttons.

As I stepped from a plane well after midnight in Winnipeg, there stood Al Gee smiling. He thought I might be hungry and had waited up for me.

As I stopped between planes in St. Paul, Jay Lurye tapped me on the shoulder and led me to the airport restaurant to swap yarns.

My old friend, George McDermott, of the Cleveland Plain Dealer, came to see me through a downpour even though he was not a well man, just to talk "show business."

My phone rang in Davenport, Ia., and it was Jack Manley, in Chicago, lonesome for someone to talk about the theatre.

In Toledo, Leone Hineline, begged me to speak to her pupils in a State Retention School, and I never had such an interested audience in my life. They loved my stories about Lillian Russell, Maxine Elliott and other greats of yesteryear, and when I reached Toronto, I found 27 letters from these youngsters awaiting me.

Herb Whittaker, of the Toronto Globe & Mail, seeking me out, asked if I would let him reproduce my old Abe Lincoln play, "The Greater American," for the hurricane sufferers. I gave my consent readily for he is such an old friend and it was for a good cause.

Venerable Dean Crow, of Michigan State College at East Lansing, was at the station in his auto to meet me which cheered me no end. Lucille Upham, at Ann Arbor, brought her husband, to talk about the theatre and what Paul Gregory was doing in the "grassroots" to bring it alive once again.

More Pals

Alex Murphree, drama critic of the Denver Post, told me how Charles Laughton had telephoned him one afternoon and said: "Alex, I'm so tired talking to people about world events that I wish you would come over and talk 'theatre' to me."

Russell McLauchlin, in Detroit, came all the way to my hotel to ask me a question: "Who was the original Dr. Watson in Gillette's 'Sherlock Holmes'?"

I told him it was Bruce McRae and made him happy.

"I knew you would know," was his thankful reply.

In Seattle I was making a broadcast with Rose Stern, notable commentator.

"I read your stories 'Stardust By Gaslight' and I want to say your story about David Warfield's last appearance on the stage was true."

Then she told me she played Jessica when he played Shylock that fateful engagement and his audience laughed. They would not take him seriously. They still remembered his Simon Levy.

In Toronto I looked up Bob McStay, the VARIETY mugg, who is also book-reviewer for the Globe & Mail and he showed me the finest collection of books dealing with the theatre, his library running to some 2,000 volumes, many of them autographed.

Dave Nederlander took me out to Detroit's great Northland suburb. You would never believe it unless you saw it. And he has a new 3,000-seat theatre, the Riviera, there for musicals.

But I could go on telling you how the legit theatre is a great living breathing institution out in the lands where the foxes say goodnight."

In taking the live theatre, with great stars, to the hinterlands, to places only reached by buses and sometimes no railroads, Paul Gregory is stirring the live theatre into a new life everywhere in America. That he has permitted me to help him stir the people throughout our land into a new knowledge of the theatre's greatness, is not alone a privilege but has brought me many happy hours of recollection.

Kay Francis to Reopen Niagara Falls Theatre

Niagara Falls, Ont.

Charles Michel Turner, who took over the summer theatre here from Maude Franchot last season, will reopen the house Jan. 24 with Kay Francis in "Traveler's Joy."

Subsequent stock bills are listed as Edward Everett Horton in "White Sheep of the Family" for a week in February; Lisa Ferraday and Luther Adler in "Bell, Book and Candle," and Gene Raymond in "The Garrison Girls," in March; ZaSu Pitts in "Miss Private Eye," and Arthur Treacher, Claire Luce, Nils Asther and Sidney Blackmer in "Don Juan in Hell," in April.

Outdoor Paris Show

Continued from page 272

pressed through the success of the snake charmer who held forth in an improvised den that was enclosed by posters so battered and faded that the words were largely obliterated and the painting of the snake, cruelly truncated.

Suddenly, the crowd deserted the snake charmer and rushed to the middle of the block. Here a magician was performing ancient card tricks, but the crowd stood spellbound and eventually succumbed to the old con game—buying a bottle of cure-all.

Yes, all this happened in Paris in the year 1954.

That evening I went to an old theatre to see a revue. The audience was made up of typical Frenchmen, men and women, old and young, all types, but no Americans. The performances consisted of one continuous series of striptease acts. Fully dressed ladies took off everything down to G-string. What a retrogressive spectacle! In sophisticated Paris where ladies for centuries have walked out nude, a new generation watched completely clad young women laboriously shedding their wardrobes. For the moment, I felt that I was attending a carnival tent show or a fast-fading performance on West 52d Street.

Current Stock Bills

(Jan. 3-16)

Feminine Touch (tryout), by G. Wood & Ken Welch — Hilltop — Parkway, Balto (4-16).

Hemlock Cup (tryout), by Edward Hunt —Theatre '55, Dallas (3-9).

The Miser (tryout), Miles Malleson adaptation of Moliere — Arena Stage, Washington (5-8).

Time Out for Ginger—Paper Mill Playhouse, Millburn, N. J. (3-9).

INDIA'S SERIOUS DANCE MYSTERIOUSLY SLOWED

By N. S. ESWAR

Madras, India.

In the present transitional period of this "new" Asiatic State, the traditional emphasis upon dancing seems to have been lost. This is a pity, and a mystery. Even the established figures like Uday Shankar, Ram Gopal, Gopinath, Sadhona Bose, Mrindalini Sarabhai and Hima Kersarkodi seem to have withdrawn into their shells, possibly for meditation.

Dancing in India dates back to antiquity. There have always been a sect of dancing girls attached to the temples and it is still true that large numbers of middle and upper class girls are studying dance. But this has little impact upon a professional dance theatre.

Last flurry in the Indian dance field was a cultural exchange of folklore troupes between here and Soviet Russia. Additionally the Indian government has fostered a new National Academy of Dance and Music.

R.P.I. LAST 32G ON BOOKINGS

Troy.

The R.P.I. Field House had an operating deficit of $32,000 last year. Loss from musical and dramatic events was $9,000. That was revealed last week by president Livingston W. Houston, in the annual report of the Rensselaer Polytech Institute.

Among the show biz bookings during the period from July 1, 1953 to June 30, year ended last June 30 were "John Brown's Body," the Boston Symphony and Boston Pops orchestras, plus the Guard Republican Band of France.

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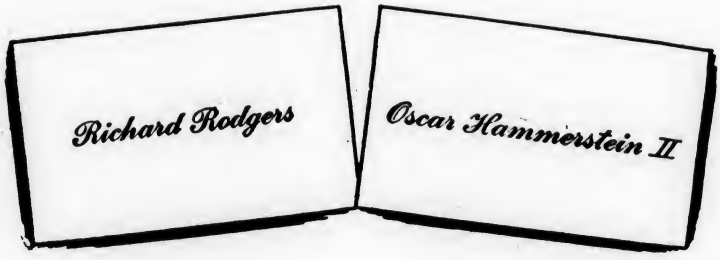

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Shows on Broadway

The Flowering Peach

Producers Theatre production of comedy-drama in two acts (eight scenes) and epilog, by Clifford Odets. Stars Menasha Skulnik; features Berta Gersten, Janice Rule, Barbara Baxley, Leon Janney, Martin Ritt, Mario Alcade. Staged by the author; scenery, Mordecai Gorelik; lighting, Feder; costumes, Ballou; music, Alan Hovhaness; producer, Robert Whitehead. At Belasco, N.Y., Dec. 28, '54; $5.75-$4.60 top ($6.90 opening).

Noah ..... Menasha Skulnik
Esther ..... Berta Gersten
Japheth ..... Mario Alcade
Shem ..... Martin Ritt
Ham ..... Leon Janney
Leah ..... Osna Palmer
Rachel ..... Janice Rule
Goldie ..... Barbara Baxley
Strange Man ..... Sidney Armus
Fawns .... Marjorie Barrett, Patricia Fay
Goat ..... Barbara Kay
Old Men .... Ludwig Roth, Sidney Kay
Lion ..... Sidney Armus

In "The Flowering Peach," Clifford Odets is apparently trying to say that the salvation of man, and therefore of God, lies in faith, self-respect and humility. Although his intention is admirable, his play is unsatisfying.

"Peach" retells the story of Noah and the flood in terms of contemporary Yiddish idiom and affectionate family bickering. After an interesting start, however, it drifts into seemingly endless talk, and not until the final half-dozen lines does the author get around to putting his point into explicit words. When he does, it turns out to be a platitude.

In Genesis, according to Odets, Noah is a very human character—overawed by the enormity of God's assignment, prone to fortify himself with nips at the bottle, inclined to impatience at his family, but simple, devout and lovable, and with a Menasha Skulnik sense of comic timing.

His family tends to be an assortment of lower east side, or perhaps Bronx, stereotypes. There's Esther, the momma, a Jewish matriarch of quiet dignity, surpassing motherly understanding, uncanny wisdom—and a drily effective comedy touch. The sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, are individualists, one a schemer, one a cynic, one an idealist. And their respective wives are different, too, but all within an uncomfortably familiar pattern.

"Peach" can be respected, not only as the deeply felt expression of the author's conviction, but also for its several excellent elements. Some of its scenes are engrossing, some are agreeably amusing and one or two are genuinely touching. Even so, the play as a whole seems talky (without the characteristic Odets inclsiveness) and progressively ineffectual. And its theme, when it's expressed at last, seems almost bromidic.

The production is spotty. Skulnik is generally fine as Noah, combining an endearing quality with affected honesty and a delicious comic style. Berta Gersten gives a skillful performance as the matriarch, while Leon Janney is thoroughly professional as the sneering Ham, and Barbara Baxley gives distinctive flavor and authority to the role of a skeptical outsider converted by the devout family.

Martin Ritt is generaliy acceptable as the crafty Shem, although he is not always audible; and Janice Rule is a beauteous Rachel, but reveals little knowledge of vocal tone or instinct for giving theatrical value to her lines. Mario Alcade is rather stiff as the earnest Japheth and Osna Palmer isn't able to give much color to the role of Leah.

Odets' staging seems strangely uneven, quite effective in the ominous, urgent scene just before the flood, for example, but lacking pace or a fluid quality at various other times, and unsuccessful in getting expressive playing from some of the cast. Mordecai Gorelik's impressionistic scenery has a folk-fable style, Feder's lighting is dramatic and the Ballou costumes and Alan Hovhaness incidental music are helpful.

But while "Peach" may be eloquent and perhaps even profound to a special audience, its wrong-end-of-the-telescope version of the Bible appears to lack general appeal. *Hobe.*

Anastasia

Elaine Perry production of drama in three acts, by Marcelle Maurette, English adaptation by Guy Bolton. Stars Viveca Lindfors, Eugenie Leontovich; features Joseph Anthony, Hurd Hatfield, David J. Stewart, Boris Tumarin, Michael Strong. Staged by Alan Schneider; scenery, costumes and lighting, Ben Edwards. At Lyceum, N.Y., Dec. 29, '54; $5.75-$4.60 top ($5.90 opening).

Chernov ..... Boris Tumarin
Varya ..... Sefton Darr
Petrovin ..... David J. Stewart
Prince Bounine ..... Joseph Anthony
Sergei ..... William Callan
Anna ..... Viveca Lindfors
Counsellor Drivinitz ..... Carl Low
Sleigh Driver ..... Stuart Germain
Charwoman ..... Vivian Nathan
Dr. Sirensky ..... Michael Strong
Dowager Empress .. Eugenie Leontovich
Baroness Livenbaum .... Dorothy Patten
Prince Paul ..... Hurd Hatfield

Probably most Sunday supplement addicts are familiar with the story of the self-styled Princess Anastasia, who lives in Germany and claims to be the youngest daughter of Nicholas II, last of the Russian Czars. The yarn has fascinated feature editors, rewrite men and romantic readers for years.

As dramatized by Marcelle Maurette and adapted into English by Guy Bolton, under the title "Anastasia," it makes engrossing and occasionally stirring theatre. The play had a moderate run in London last season, but should do much better on Broadway. In fact, it looks like a hit. It also stacks up as spectacular screen material.

Whether the Anastasia story is history or fiction is, of course, a mystery. Russian emigrees generally regard it as a hoax, and are inclined to be bitter about it (the Russian language newspaper in New York reportediy gave the play a severe pan).

Anyway, the legend is that when the royal Romanoff family was murdered by the Bolsheviki in 1918, young Princess Anastasia was somehow not killed, but terribly wounded, and was saved by two soldier-brothers. Instead of being thrown down an abandoned mineshaft with the bodies of the others, she is supposed to have been spirited out of Russia, to Bucharest and finally to Berlin, where she became an inmate of an insane asylum.

As stage material, this is a natural. It is wonderfully old-fashioned theatrical hokum of the Mayerling, "Prisoner of Zenda" and "Tovarich" brand of romantics, with a touch of "Pygmalion" in the transformation of the drowned-rat asylum patient into the handsome, self-possessed and regal Princess and Czarina-in-exile.

"Anastasia" is superbly done. It is beautifully cast, particularly in its costars, Viveca Lindfors and Eugenie Leontovich, is expertly directed by Alan Schneider and artfully designed by Ben Edwards. It is an emphatic credit to producer Elaine Perry.

The play starts quietly in the barnlike Berlin home of Prince Bounine, a venal former Czarist general who, it quickly transpires, hopes to exploit the supposed Princess to get possession of a huge Romanoff fortune believed to be on deposit in a London bank. The pace and interest quicken with the arrival of the pathetic asylum patient who has just been rescued from suicide in a canal.

It reaches a climax in the enthralling, affecting second-act meeting between the claimant Princess and the doughty, sceptical dowager Empress. Although the contrived third act doesn't equal the tension or impact of the second, it wraps up the drama satisfactorily.

Authoress Marcell Maurette and adaptor Guy Bolton take the premise that the self-styled Anastasia is, indeed, the actual Princess. That may or may not be justified by the real-life facts, but it makes obvious theatrical sense, since it creates sympathy for the heroine and greatly strengthens the emotional impact of the key scenes between the Princess and the Empress.

Miss Lindfors gives a lovely performance as the Princess. From the shuffling unkempt, miserable spectre of her first entrance, through the growing awareness, confidence and imperiousness of her final scenes, she gives a skillfully dimensioned portrayal that is believable and touching. It establishes her as a genuine star of legit, as well as of films.

Miss Leontovich is also irresistably convincing as the lonely but proud old Empress whose disbelief and emotional reserve are melted in her recognition of and reunion with her royal granddaughter. The consciousness and authority of stardom going back to "Grand Hotel" and "Twentieth Century" are evident and just right for this role.

Joseph Anthony is admirably suave as the villainous mastermind of the plot to palm off the supposedly sham Princess, while Boris Tumarin and David J. Stewart are properly varied as respectively cautious and excitable accomplices.

Hurd Hatfield is acceptable as a shallow Romanoff fortune hunter, Vivian Nathan and Stuart Germain are expressive former Winter Palace servants, Michael Strong is passable in the synthetic role of a doubting ex-sweetheart, and Carl Low, Sefton Darr, William Callan and Dorothy Patten are competent supporting players.

Schneider's staging has impressive pace and compulsion, and the Edwards interior setting, changing from dinginess to bogus finery, is eloquently atmospheric.

"Anastasia" is palpable make-believe—and first-rate entertainment. *Hobe.*

Current London Shows

London.

(Figures denote premiere dates)
Airs Shoestring, Royal Ct. (4-22-53).
All For Mary, Duke York (9-9-54).
Beatrice Lillie, Globe (11-24-54).
Bell, Book, Candle, Phoenix (10-5-54).
Book of Month, Cambridge (10-21-54).
Both Ends Meet, Apollo (6-9-54).
Boy Friend, Wyndham's (12-1-53).
Can-Can, Coliseum (10-14-54).
Crazy Gang, Vic. Pal. (12-16-54).
Dry Rot, Whitehall (8-31-54).
Happy Holiday, Palace (12-22-54).
Hedda Gabler, Westm'ster (11-29-54).
Hippo Dancing, Lyric (4-7-54).
I Am a Camera, New (3-12-54).
Intimacy At 8:30, Criterion (4-29-54).
Joyce Grenfell, St. Mart. (6-2-54).
King and I, Drury Lane (10-8-53).
Manor of Northstead, Duchess (4-28-54).
Matchmaker, Haymarket (11-4-54).
Mousetrap, Ambas (11-25-52).
Old Vic Rep, Old Vic (9-9-54).
Party Spirit, Piccadilly (9-23-54).
Pay the Piper, Saville (12-21-54).
Relations Apart, Garrick (8-3-54).
Sabrina Fair, Palace (8-4-54).
Salad Days, Vaudeville (8-5-54).
Separate Tables, St. James's (9-22-54).
Simon & Laura, Strand (11-24-54).
Spider's Web, Savoy (12-14-54).
Talk of Town, Adelphi (11-17-54).
Teahouse Aug. Moon, Her Maj. (4-22-54).
Wedding in Paris, Hipp. (4-3-54).
Witness Prosecution, W. Gard. (10-28-53).

SCHEDULED OPENINGS
Glass Clock, Aldwych (1-3-55).
Blame Adam, New Lind. (1-31-55).

Scheduled N.Y. Openings

(Theatre indicated if set)

BROADWAY
Time of Life, City Center (1-5).
Festival, Longacre (1-12).
Sailor's Delight, Imperial (1-13).
Put All Together (wk 1-17).
Fourposter, City Center (1-19).
Plain & Fancy, Heilinger (1-20).
Painted Days (wk 1-24).
Grand Prize, Plymouth (1-25).
Tonight in Samarkand (wk 1-31).
Waltz of the Toreadors, City Center (2-2).
Silk Stockings, Imperial (2-3).
Dark Is Light Enough, ANTA (2-9).
Desperate Hours, Barrymore (2-10).
Three For Tonight, Plymouth (wk 3-20).

OFF-B'WAY
Dr.'s Dilemma, Phoenix (1-11).
Passion of Gros, de Lys (1-18).
Thieves' Carnival, Cherry Lane (2-1).
Three Sisters, 4th St. (2-10).

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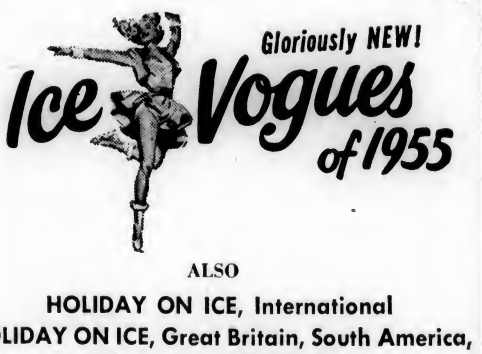

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Oct. 12 - Oct. 17—Denver Coliseum, East 46th and Humboldt, Denver, Colo.

Oct. 21 - Oct. 31—Chicago Stadium, 1800 W. Madison, Chicago, Ill.

Nov. 4 - Nov. 14—Cincinnati Gardens, 2250 Seymour Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio

Nov. 16 - Nov. 28—The Gardens, 110 N. Craig St., Pittsburgh, Pa.

Nov. 30 - Dec. 11—Sports Arena, Hershey, Pa.

Dec. 12 - Dec. 19—The Arena, Grove St. at Orange, New Haven, Conn.

Dec. 20 - Dec. 24—Christmas Vacation.

Dec. 25 - Jan. 16—The Arena, 45th and Market Sts., Philadelphia, Pa.

Jan. 18 - Jan. 30—The Arena, 3700 Euclid Ave., Cleveland, Ohio

Jan. 31 - Feb. 4—Maple Leaf Gardens, 60 Carleton, Toronto, Ont.

Feb. 6 - Feb. 13—The Forum, 2313 St. Catherine St. West, Montreal, Que.

Feb. 15 - Feb. 27—Boston Gardens, North Station, Boston, Mass.

Feb. 28 - Mar. 6—Rhode Island Auditorium, 1111 No. Main St., Providence, R. I.

Mar. 8 - Mar. 13—Memorial Auditorium, Buffalo, N. Y.

Mar. 14 - Mar. 20—Onondaga County War Memorial, Syracuse, N. Y.

Mar. 22 - Mar. 28—Veterans Memorial Auditorium, 5th at Center, Des Moines, Iowa

Mar. 29 - Apr. 17—The Arena, 2900 Dupont Ave., S., Minneapolis, Minn.

Apr. 19 - Apr. 24—The Arena, 410 West Kilbourn Ave., Milwaukee, Wis.

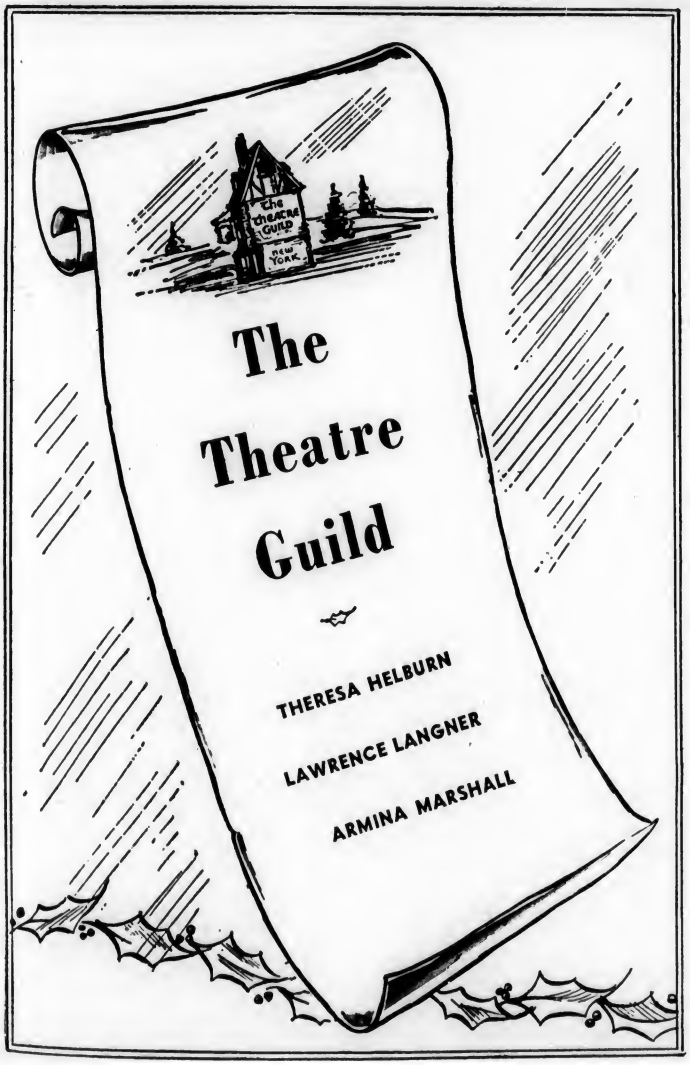
Apr. 27 - May 3—Spokane Coliseum, 1101 N. Howard, Spokane, Wash.

May 5 - May 11—Vancouver Forum, Exhibition Park, Vancouver, B. C.

May 12 - May 22—Civic Ice Arena, 4th No. and Mercer Sts., Seattle, Wash.

May 23 - June 21—Annual Vacation.

Opens June 22—Winterland, Post and Steiner Sts., San Francisco, Calif.



Anthony Brady Farrell

PRODUCTIONS

MARK HELLINGER THEATRE

OBITUARIES

DAVE FOX

Dave Fox, 53, former executive secretary of the N.Y. branch of the American Guild of Variety Artists, and at one time executive director of the Theatre Restaurant Owners Assn., died Dec. 29, in New York.

Further details in vaude section.

MARIA EIS

Maria Eis, 53, leading Burgtheatre actress, died of arthritis in Vienna, Dec. 20, after a long illness. Often cal ed the "Miss Yvette Guilbert of the German-language stage," she had appeared in comedy roles for more than 20 years.

A native of Prague, Miss Eis was wed to composer Robert Fanta.

PETER H. ALBRECHT

Peter H. Albrecht, 67, who headed a theatrical stage equipment firm in Milwaukee, died of a heart attack recently while installing a screen in a Wakefield, Mich., film theatre. Prior to forming his own concern, he was a stage carpenter at downtown Milwaukee theatres.

His wife and a sister survive.

JOYCE O'HARA
JANUARY 9, 1953

ROSARIO SCALERO

Rosario Scalero, 84, Italian violinist, composer and music teacher, died Dec. 28 in Aosta, Italy. "The Divine Forest," a symphonic poem for orchestra, was his best known work.

For several years Scalero taught instrumental music at the Mannes School in New York and at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, where he headed the theory and composition dept.

William Angus Sinclair, 48, broadcaster and philosopher, died while climbing in mountain blizzard in Cairngorm mountains, northeast Scotland, Dec. 21. He was condemned by Nazis for his anti-Hitler "Voice of the Nazi" broadcasts from London during the war years.

Ben Griffiths, 56, leader of orch with touring version of "Guys and Dolls," died recently in Liverpool, Eng. He toured for past six years with Prince Littler shows, including "Wild Violets," "Brigadoon" and "Carousel."

Julian T. Sullivan, 36, Sunday editor and former film reviewer of the Indianapolis Star, died there Dec. 23. He was the son of Hassal T. Sullivan, news editor of the Chicago American. Parents and wife survive.

Ralph (Red) Gormley, 60, veteran stagehand who was a familiar backstage figure at Milwaukee theatres, died in that city Dec. 23, of injuries sustained in a fall. His wife and two sisters survive.

George D. Brennan, 65, stage property man for 45 years and with the New York City Center Opera Co. for the last 12 years, died Dec. 23 in Yonkers, N. Y. His wife survives.

Frank L. Murray, former manager of the old Hippodrome Theatre in New York and the Orpheum Theatre in Brooklyn, died Dec. 27 in Bridgeport, Conn. His wife survives.

Margaret Hill-Boyle, pianist and organist, and official Gaelic movement accompanist, died Dec. 21 in Glasgow.

Charles F. Sippel, 82, retired string bass player, died recently in Milwaukee.

Bigtime Status On 'Dancing Waters'

"Dancing Waters," marking its second anni since its introduction to American audiences at Radio City Music Hall, N. Y., has reached big time status. The fountain display entrepreneurs have expanded to 11 units touring North America since it was imported from Europe by Haro'd Steinman, Sam Shayon and Hans Hasslach.

The fountains have hit grosses as high as $35,000 for a 17-day stand at the Pomona (Calif.) Fair, a record take for any one engagement. The display did $16,000 at Lincoln, Neb., in six days, and $31,000 in 15 days at Dallas State Fair Grounds. It hit its first repeat engagement at Radio City Music Hall and is again slated to play that house. "Dancing Waters" has also been signed to be on permanent exhibit at the soon-to-be-opened Royal Nevada Hotel, Las Vegas.

Shayon is now in Costa Rica supervising an installation which will play a theatre and a fair. The fount is also booked at the Indianapolis Auto Show starting Jan. 21. Puerto Rican dates are pending.

Fountain is now booked for a series of repeat stands. The gates have been sufficiently attractive in most spots to warrant a second try. Shayon says the markets haven't been fully tapped, because the bulk of the date has been outdoors. Many fairs haven't been able to buy the display because of routing difficulties. Despite the fact that no performers are visible, the fountain employs two persons. One works the console, which controls the lights and sprays, and the other is a technician. It's been found that former dancers or performers do well at the console controls. The sense of rhythm gives them an edge.

Waring to Play Memphis

Memphis.

Fred Waring and his Pennsylvanians, have been booked for a one-nighter here in the South Hall Auditorium, Jan. 18. It will be his second stop here in two years.

House, which seats 2,500, has been scaled to $4 top. Attraction is booked under banner of Early Maxwell Associates.

MARRIAGES

Renee Jeanmaire to Roland Petit, Saint-Cyr-La-Riviere, France, Dec. 29. Bride and groom are ballet dancers.

Helen Bryce to Neil Murray, Edinburgh, Scot., Dec. 20. Bride's secretary with Empire Theatre, Edinburgh; he's house's assistant manager.

Paula Stabins to Lee D. Davis, Rochester, N. Y., Dec. 29. He's a staff director at WABC-TV, N. Y.

Christine Dorsey to Jacques Abram, N.Y., Dec. 23. Groom is concert pianist.

BIRTHS

Mr. and Mrs. Ted B. Sawyer, daughter, Keene, N. H., Dec. 26. Father is program director of radio station WKNE in that city.

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Cioffi, son, New York, Dec. 22. Father is a CBS newscaster.

Mr. and Mrs. Gabe Viera, son, Hempstead, L. I., Dec. 26. Father is a newsman with WHLI, Hempstead.

Mr. and Mrs. Herb Wolf, daughter, New York, Dec. 25. Father is producer of the ABC-TV show, "Masquerade Party."

Mr. and Mrs. Irving Fields, daughter, New York, Dec. 22. Father is the bandleader.

CHATTER

Broadway

Herman Hickman planing to Mobile to looksee the Senior Bowl game on Jan. 8.

NBC-TV column editor Bill Stein to join the press department on the Coast next week after four and a half years with the web in New York.

Lanny Ross to make his first appearance at Town Hall, but at a benefit stint for the Arthritis Fund (Jan. 8) along with Frank Sinatra, Robert Q. Lewis, et al.

Bernardo Segall, who is composing the score for Ben Hecht's "Down And Across," is giving a piano recital at Carnegie Hall, N.Y., Friday (7). He did the score for Tennessee Williams' "Camino Real."

Paris

By Gene Moskowitz

(28 *Rue Huchette; Odeon* 49-44)

There were 1,372,043 American tourists in 1954, which is an increase of more than 100,000 over 1953.

Brigitte Auber, who was in Alfred Hitchcock's "To Catch A Thief" (Par), being paged by Hitchcock for another role in his upcoming pic, "The Trouble With Harry" (Par).

Ruby Washington here for a special recital at the Ambassadeurs.

Albert Husson's adaption of John Patrick's "Teahouse of the August Moon" goes into the Theatre Montparnasse in February.

Alfred Hitchcock's "Rebecca" (Col) getting a re-release in three firstruns. Other Hitchcock pix now playing are "Dial M For Murder" (WB) and "Strangers on a Train" (WB).

Alexandra Rouby-Janska yanked her new legiter "Seigneur De San-Gor," by Gloria Alcorta, after four days at her Theatre Des Arts due to bad crix. Replaces it with Alfred Fabre-Luce's "Come Les Dieux" (As The Gods) which moves over from the Theatre De L'Ouevre.

Theatre Renaissance feting the thousandth rep of Albert Husson's "La Cusine Des Anges" (My Three Angels).

Nice is banning two pix, the Gallic "Le Feu Dans La Peau" (Fire In The Flesh) and the Swedish "Monika."

Memphis

By Matty Brescia

Billy Graham's pic, "Souls In Conflict," played to SRO audiences at Auditorium.

Women of the Motion Picture Industry (WOMPI) here drew praise for playing "Santa" for the Veterans Christmas Fund drive.

Jimmy Bishop, former radio chief for Matty Brescia Enterprises here, on holiday vacation from Missouri U's school of journalism.

Tony Tedesco, UA local sales chief and his wife, to Mexico for annual vacation.

Phil Belz, new owner of Silver Slipper nitery, to Europe.

Frankfurt

By Hazel Guild

(24 *Rheinstrasse;* 76751)

Lili Palmer's starrer "Das Feuerwerk" (O Mein Papa) is the German entry for the Punta del Esta Uruguay International Film Festival Jan. 15.

"Lachten Verboten," the series of old Charlie Chaplin shorts, getting outstanding press praise here.

Anna Sten shows up on the German screens for first time in a decade with the January opening of new 20th-Fox pic, "Soldier of Fortune."

Dieter Borsche, one of best known German actors, doing dubbing on "All Baba and the Forty Thieves," French film due to open here shortly.

Anna Dammanns, former big-name German actress who has not made a film here since before the war, stages a comeback with the lead in "Chief Dr. Solm" which Constantin will release here.

Marjorie Radovan, San Francisco thrush who performed 63 "Traviata's" over Germany and Yugoslavia, planed home for some first-of-year tele shows in Frisco.

"Das Feuerwer," which was a film hit in Germany, is being done as a musical for the first January showing at Frankfurt's Kleines Haus Theatre.

Metro's next film here will be "Gypsy Colt" while United Artists' next will be "Beat the Devil."

Honolulu

By Walt Christie

Paul Szilard ballet troupe in town for McKinley auditorium engagement, George D. Oakley promoting.

First VistaVision pic, "White Christmas," debuted on New Year's Eve at the Palace and King theatres.

New United plane service, launched Saturday (1), now links Honolulu with Los Angeles in seven hours and 45 minutes.

Filipino stars Oscar Moreno, Lilia Dizan and Gil de Leon were hosted at an aloha party before leaving for Los Angeles.

Andy Cummings and Bronk Horner bands doubling up at Queen's Surf, Waikiki, with Rita Ray bicycling between Park-Surf hotel's Little Dipper room and Dot's in Wahiawa.

Scotland

By Gordon Irving

(*Glasgow; Kelvin* 1590)

J. K. Stafford Poole named as new prexy of Scot Cinematograph Exhibitors Assn.

Anna Neagle making personals in Glasgow cinemas Jan. 17 to boost her new pic, "Lilacs in the Spring," which teams her with Errol Flynn.

Odeon Theatre, leading Rank house in Glasgow, celebrating 20th anni with "White Christmas" (Par). Bing Crosby also starred in house's opening film, "She Loves Me Not."

Vaude biz in smaller Scot houses took pre-Christmas nosedive, particularly at Empire Theatre, Greenock.

Aly Wilson pacted for summer stint at Morecambe, north-of-Eng. resort.

"Magnificent Obsession" (U) registering solid biz Christmas-New Year week at Gaumont, Glasgow city-center house.

Vienna

By Emil W. Maass

(*Grosse Schiffgasse* 1*A; A*45045)

American baritone Edmont Hurschell inked by the State Opera for three years.

Ernst Marischka started work on his next film, "Deutschmeister," with Romy and Magda Schneider.

Ludig Solski, 101, oldest Polish actor, died in Cracow.

Eleanor Knapp sang at the American House in Graz, Styria.

John Patrick's "Heart," under the direction of Guenther Haenel, scoring a great success on Volkstheatre tour through Lower Austria.

Menotti's short opera, "Amahl," on the program of USFA Josef Hall theatre during Christmas season.

Salzburg claims being the most film-minded city. There is one seat for every 20 inhabitants.

Hannerl Matz to play beside Josef Meinrad in new film, "Concert," by Hermann Bahr.

Paris Theatre Populaire, under Jean Vilar, will produce Moliere's "Don Juan" during the next Salzburg festivals.

Rosenhuegel studios (Russian) shooting the Milloecker operetta, "Gasparone" in the Burgenland province.

In Memoriam 1954

RUBE BERNSTEIN
LOUIS EPSTEIN
PETER ERMATINGER
JOSEPH FRANKS
BEN GILMAN
NICK HOLDE
RICHARD LAMBERT
FRANK J. LEA
CARLTON MILES
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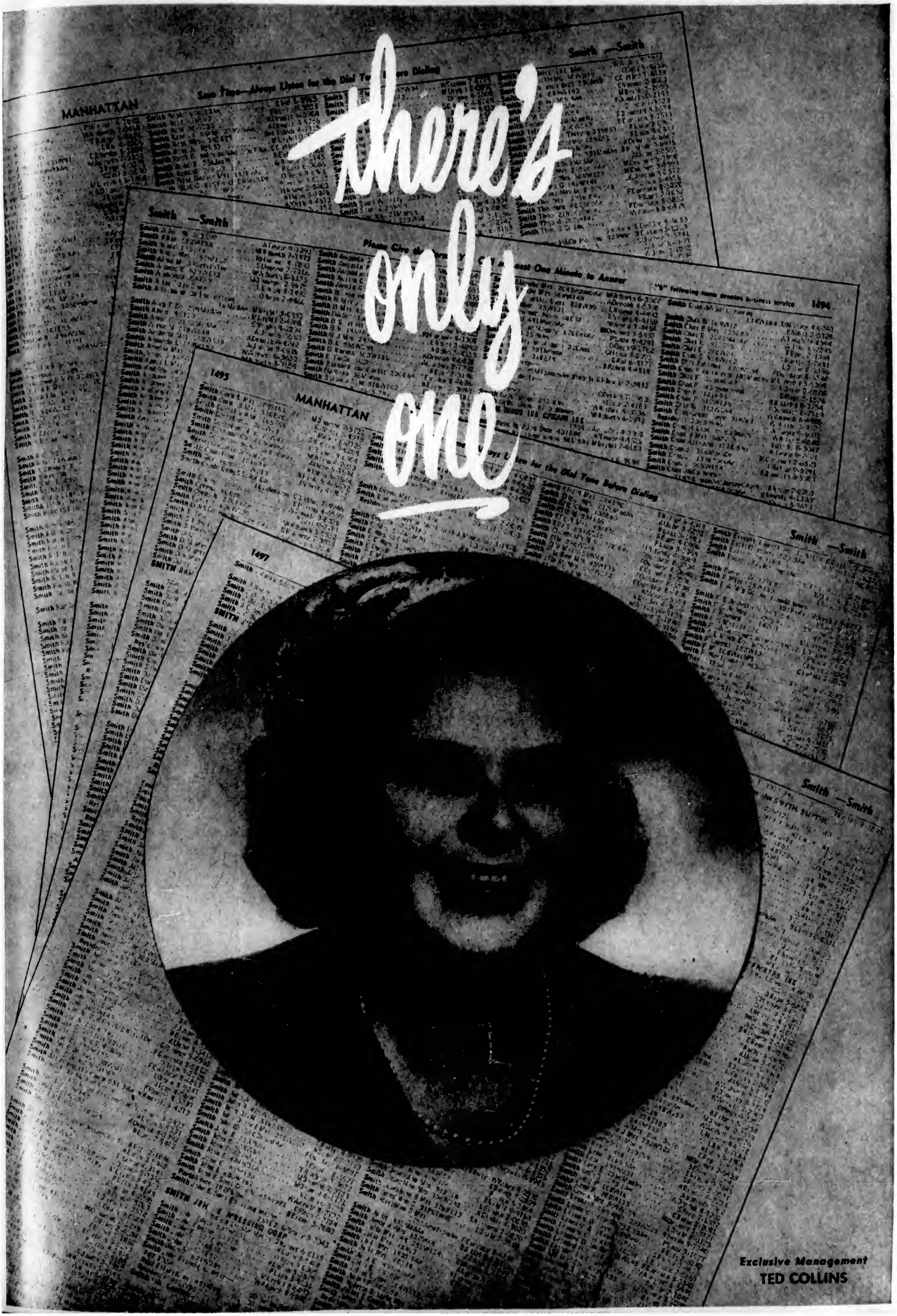
His Brothers
JULES—HAROLD—ALBERT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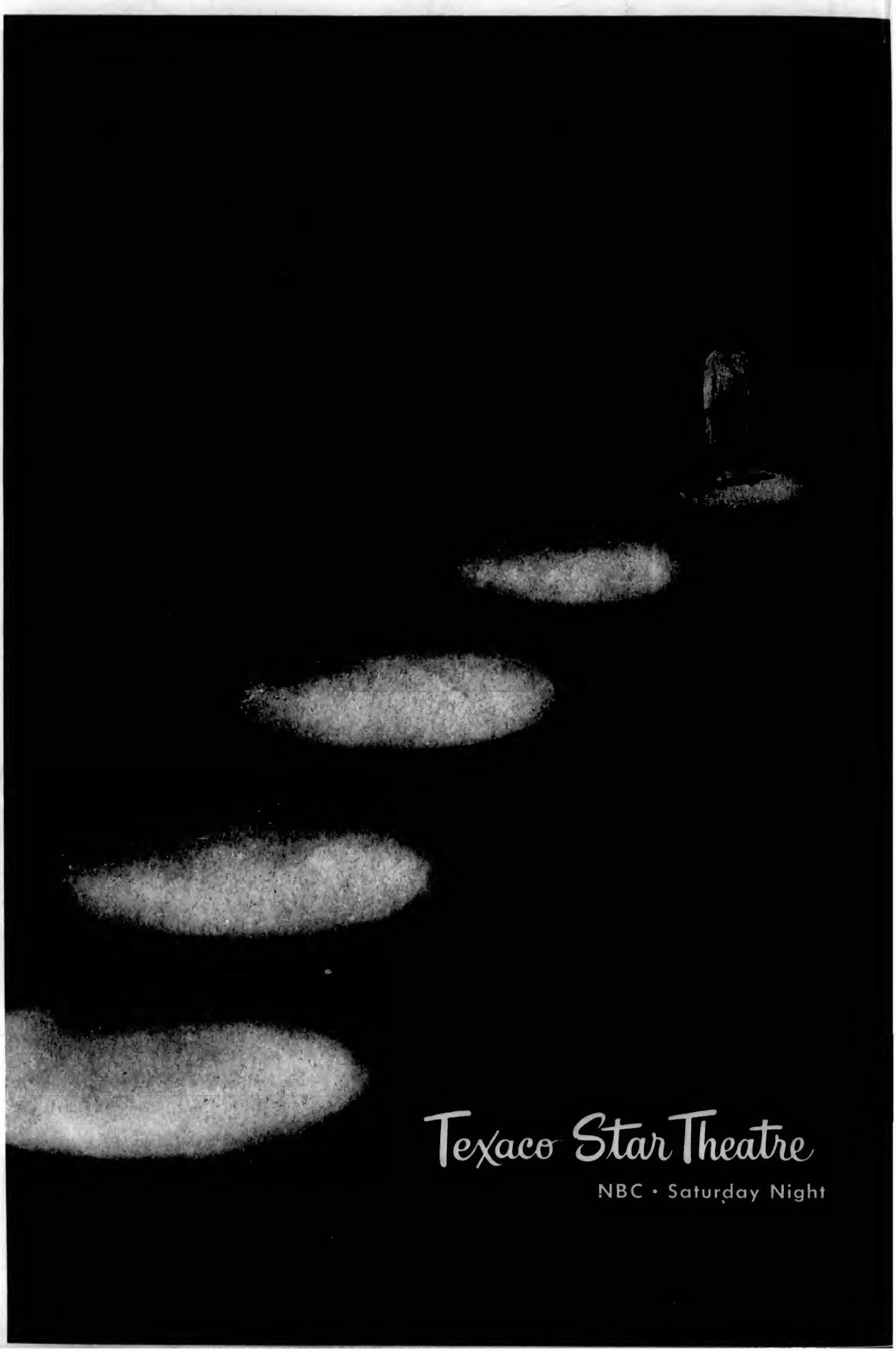
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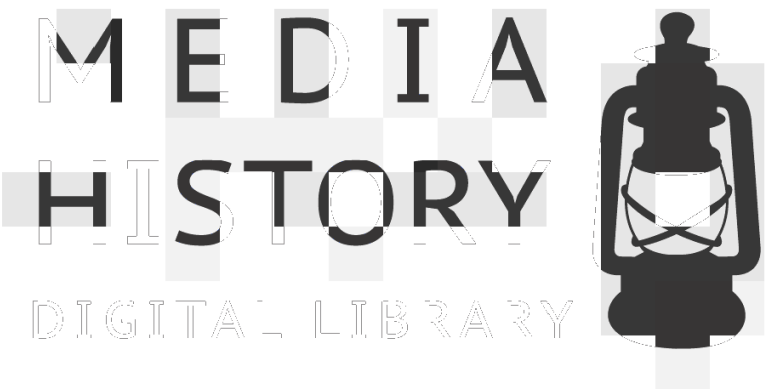

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